$50 MILLION WINNERS

GLEN DAVIS MURDER
RICHMOND HILL MAN GUILTY OF SHOOTING PHILANTHROPIST {page 3}

CANADIANS IN SOUTH KOREA FEEL ANXIOUS

{page 10}

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Wednesday, December 21, 2011
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News worth sharing.

Anger. In Egypt

▶ Hundreds of Egyptian women march in the streets of Cairo Tuesday to show their anger over recent violence used against them in clashes between police and protesters.

AMR NABIL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Women protest army's use of excessive force

Egypt's ruling generals are coming under mounting criticism at home and abroad for the military's use of excessive force against unarmed protesters, including women, as they try to crush the pro-democracy movement calling for their ouster. See story, page 12.

Century-old murder trial denounced

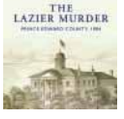
Judge writes key footprint evidence was contaminated in Picton case 128 years ago

The hangman's bill was $40 plus $6.50 for "refreshments," which seems strangely self-indulgent given how the executions were botched.

Joseph Thomset and George Lowder did not die instantly on the gallows at the Picton jail, but were left dangling at the end of their ropes, kicking violently and suffocating slowly.

The two men had accepted their fate and were resigned to their sentences for a murder at a Prince Edward County farmhouse the night of Dec. 21, 1883.

But a new book by an Ontario judge makes a case for what some observers began to suspect in the aftermath of their trial — their convictions may have been a miscarriage of justice, the product of amateur detective work and a rush to judgment by a police chief determined to make his name as a crime buster and by a community bent on revenge.



"They were out for blood.... This was a terrible crime. It shook the community to its core." AUTHOR JUSTICE ROBERT SHARPE

"There was even talk of lynching the men who had been arrested," said Justice Robert Sharpe, who delves into the case in The Lazier Murder, published by the Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History and the University of Toronto Press.

And in 19th century Canada, once the public had decided someone was guilty of a crime, there were few opportunities for changing minds. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A cool spot

Sweden now a popular location for filmmakers {page 27}

Dutch television

Fine young cannibals

Two men eat flesh on youth-targeting network {page 16}

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Penthouse with a view 905's priciest condo

RICK EGLINTON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

▶ Condos at 60 Absolute Dr.

Until now, 60 Absolute Dr. in Mississauga was the address for the celebrated "Marilyn Monroe" building, one of a pair of curvy skyscrapers that wind their way into the clouds.

Now it is also the address for the most expensive condo in the 905.

A 56th-floor penthouse in the iconic tower, with 180-degree views of the lake and the city's skyline, is up for sale for $3.2 million, a price that is generating a lot of buzz. Set at the corner of Hurontario Street and Burnhamthorpe Road, the Absolute towers are the daring outcome of an international design competition won by MAD Architects of Beijing. The first tower, quickly dubbed the Marilyn for its sinuous shape — which took complex computer calculations to build — proved so popular the builders decided to erect a second tower.

Together they constitute the most recognizable and talked-about project beyond Toronto's borders, pointed out Ben Myers, editor of Urbanation Inc. "It is one of the most desirable addresses."

The price tag of $3.2 million may be a new high for Mississauga, but it's still peanuts compared with Toronto. A 55th-floor penthouse atop the Four Seasons Hotel Private Residences in Toronto sold for $28 million in May.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Guilty verdict in Davis case

Home renovator found guilty of first-degree murder in philanthropist's death Mistrial for a second accused

ONTARIO SUPERIOR COURT EXHIBIT

▶ Ivgeny Vorobiov, convicted of first-degree murder Tuesday in the May 18, 2007 shooting of philanthropist Glen Davis, is shown in a photo taken during his Dominican Republic honeymoon — a few days before the murder — wearing a distinctive baseball hat with a green kangaroo logo. A similar hat was worn by a suspect whose image was captured on video where Davis was shot.

It was six years ago exactly that Toronto philanthropist Glen Davis was the victim of a bizarre attack by a man wielding a baseball bat.

It was the first attempt on his life. Seventeen months later, on May 18, 2007, Davis was shot to death in an underground parking lot at Eglinton Avenue East and Mount Pleasant Road. He was 66.

On Tuesday, an Ontario Superior Court jury convicted Richmond Hill home renovator, Ivgeny (Eugene) Vorobiov, 33, of first-degree murder, finding he fired two bullets into Davis as he returned to his SUV after lunch with a friend from the World Wildlife Fund.

Jurors rejected Vorobiov's testimony that he brought a gun and silencer to 245 Eglinton Ave. East intending to kill Davis but changed his mind at the last minute, prompting an accomplice to carry through with the plan.

Philanthropy

- Davis was one of the leading funders of the conservation movement in Canada.

Vorobiov looked down when the jury foreman read out the verdict.

Jurors, however, failed to reach a consensus on whether Vorobiov's boss and close friend, Dmitri Kossyrine, 33, arranged the murder at the instigation of the victim's godson, Marshall Ross. Ross, 41, pleaded guilty to first-degree murder in October and is serving a life sentence in a Kingston penitentiary.

It was a bittersweet result for Davis's family and friends. "We thought this would be the end. It just goes on and that's the hard part," he said Tuesday. He praised the investigative team and Crown attorneys Hank Goody and Bev Richards for doing a "fantastic job."

Lawyer Peter Quinn, who testified at the trial, called his late friend "one of the most generous men I've ever met."

"We are glad that three of the four accused have been dealt with and it's over. It's been a long ordeal."

The jury retired to begin deliberations Saturday morning after hearing eight weeks of evidence. But by Sunday evening it was apparent there was uncertainty as to Kossyrine's level of involvement.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Cinema candy wrappers reused

CONTRIBUTED

A Toronto-area recycling initiative aims to put some of the sweet back into used candy wrappers.

Cineplex Entertainment and TerraCycle Canada have a pilot project to collect used snack packaging at five of the movie chain's biggest theatres in the GTA.

The initiative refashions the wrappers into something new. "We call it upcycling," says TerraCycle Canada general manager Luisa Girotto.

In the recycling process, the packaging is shredded and converted into a plastic material that can be reused in a wide range of products, to "offset virgin materials," Girotto said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

▶ A bag made from upcycled candy wrappers.

News in brief

Fine for real estate agent

NEWMARKET. Vaughan real estate agent Fernando Perri has been ordered to pay $93,679 for failing to report taxable income of $289,344 on real estate commissions from 2003 to 2005.

Perri, who operates in Vaughan and North York, pleaded guilty before Newmarket's Ontario Court of Justice earlier this year in January to two counts of tax evasion and was sentenced this week.

His fine amounts to 100 per cent of the federal income taxes and goods-and-services taxes he attempted to evade, Canada Revenue Agency said in a release.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

1 news

New Yorkers wishing to be buried in pet cemeteries with their furry friends get good news from the state. Scan code for story.

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3 The codes will direct your mobile browser to **m.metronews.ca**

On the web at metronews.ca

Twitter's digital swear jar aims to turn your salty tweets into charitable donations. More at metronews.ca/video

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Auto-load glitch hits Presto cards

Money was deducted from customer bank accounts until Dec. 8, 9 and 10, says Metrolinx spokeswoman

[illegible] needs during the holidays is a surprise hole in their budget. So when Adam Field read in a GO rider's blog that the automatic reload feature was malfunctioning on some Presto transit fare cards, he decided to check his statement.

Sure enough, there were 11 instances in which the Presto system loaded $40 on Field's transit card before it reached the $20 balance that's supposed to trigger a cash injection.

The auto-load feature allows Presto users to trigger a transfer from a bank account or credit card onto their transit smartcard when Presto reaches a minimum balance determined by the user.

Response

- A spokeswoman for Metrolinx told the Toronto Star on Tuesday that the agency only discovered the issue last week, at which point it emailed or phoned 320 affected customers.
- The auto-load problem was in effect between Nov. 7 and Dec. 4.

Field had his account programmed to take $40 from a bank account if his Presto balance went below $20. Although he doesn't think his balance ever went under $50 in the affected period, his Presto account received 11 $40 credits.

But the funds weren't being withdrawn from his bank, so last week, when he discovered the problem, Field found himself overdrawn and on the hook for about $150 in bank fees.

It's not the money that irks the Hamilton-Toronto commuter, although he said he had to complain vigorously to get Metrolinx to up its original offer of a $10 voucher to $150 to cover the bank costs. It's the fact that he wasn't notified that annoys the 27-year-old systems administrator.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Holiday. Charity

▶ The decorated lawn of Charles Williams' home on Ilona Park Road is seen in Pickering on Tuesday.

PAWEL DWULIT/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Lawn turned into winter wonderland

The Williams and Wright clans, who are neighbours, attract hundreds of visitors over the holidays as they compete annually for the best decorated home while collecting donations for the local food bank and Salvation Army. With just days to go before Christmas, the Salvation Army's national kettle campaign is about $6 million shy of its $19-million fundraising goal. In the GTA, the kettles need $900,000 more in change and bills to meet the local $3-million goal.

10-month sentence for unapologetic G20 anarchist

One of the most prominent anti-G20 Toronto anarchists remained defiant Tuesday while being sentenced to 10 months in jail for counselling mischief.

"I stand here guilty of breaking your laws, not the laws of justice," Leah Henderson, 27, told provincial court Justice Lloyd Budzinsky.

"I submit to your jails because today you hold all the weapons," Henderson told a Finch Avenue West courtroom packed with her supporters.

Henderson and her then-boyfriend, Alex Hundert, were arrested in their west Toronto apartment after police stormed in during the early hours of June 26, 2010, the second day of the G20 summit.

She did not participate in protests where some people smashed windows and set fire to police cruisers, but pleaded guilty Nov. 22 to counselling others to commit mischief.

It has not been proven that anyone she advised went on to commit crimes.

"This entire prosecution was borne of the politics of fear — fear of our ideas," she said.

She told the judge she responded to the G20 as a person of conscience and as part of a community that envisages a "future that is truly free."

Defence lawyer Brydie Bethell said Henderson is committed to social justice and the anarchist ideal of non-hierarchical, locally driven communities.

But Crown prosecutor Jason Miller said she and others used the G20 "to exercise dissent in a criminal and violent fashion," thus harming the freedom of expression of peaceful demonstrators.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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▶ Leah Henderson, 27, walks into court Tuesday before being sentenced to 10 months in jail for counselling acts of mischief.

"Your approach was to put your beliefs above the safety ... of others."
JUSTICE LLOYD BUDZINSKY

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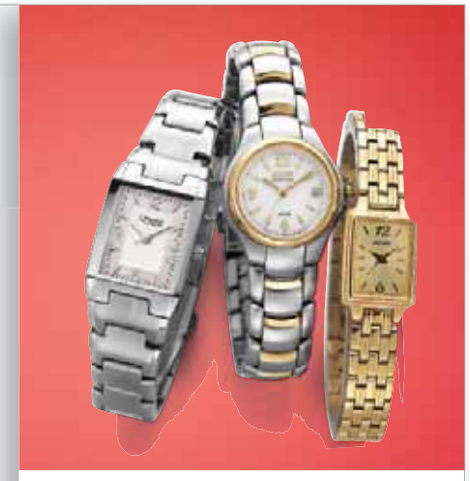

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DAVID COOPER/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

▶ Tom Closson

Health caps could force reforms

Ottawa's plan to scale back transfers could help root out waste, says Ontario Hospital Association president ◐ Calls for family physicians to be more accountable and organized

Ottawa's plan to cut the rate of growth of future health transfers could force long-needed reforms, says the president of the Ontario Hospital Association.

Speaking on Tuesday, Tom Closson said that while he does not agree with federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty's unilateral approach, putting a lid on future increases could force provinces to adopt measures that would reduce waste, cut spending and get better bang for the health-care dollar.

"It is a great opportunity for us to really look at how we deliver health care. It's clear to me when I look at other countries that Canada should be able to get better value for money than it is getting right now," he said.

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Team. Work

▶ Cirque du Soliel's Quidam performers use only their hands to create this stunning vertical hold.

CONTRIBUTED

Tour opens in Toronto

Quidam, the latest touring production from Cirque du Soleil, opened in Toronto Tuesday night at the Ricoh Coliseum. It runs until Dec. 30.

Ex-bishop wins extra credit for serving time

JESSICA SMITH
IN OTTAWA

A former Roman Catholic bishop caught with child pornography at the Ottawa International Airport will get two-for-one credit for his time spent in jail prior to sentence, a judge has ruled.

Raymond Lahey, the 71-year old former head of the diocese of Antigonish, N.S., asked to go directly to jail last May when he pleaded guilty to a single count of importing child pornography.

The federal government ended two-for-one credit for pre-sentence custody in 2010, but Justice Jack Kirkland ruled that because Lahey was charged in 2009, the old rules applies in his case.

Kirkland dismissed the Crown's suggestion that Lahey asking to be incarcerated early was a ploy to get his sentenced reduced.

The Crown wants an 18- to 22-month sentence and says the offence of possession is serious.

"At the root of all child porn is the hands-on abuse of children," said Crown prosecutor David Elhadad.

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Canadian prof credited with HIV breakthrough

- U.S. clinical trials could lead to first preventative vaccine for virus
- Patents for vaccine already secured in more than 70 countries

ANGELA MULLINS
@METRONEWS.CA
METRO CANADA IN LONDON, ONT.

ANGELA MULLINS/METRO

▶ Yong Kang, a University of Western Ontario researcher and professor, talks Tuesday at the university's research park about a vaccine he developed to prevent HIV/AIDS. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved clinical trials of the vaccine.

Yong Kang has played a role in developing vaccines for polio and hepatitis B.

Now, the researcher from University of Western Ontario in London has earned approval from the U.S. government to start human clinical trials on what could be a breakthrough vaccination for preventing HIV.

The vaccine — technically named SAV001 — is the result of nearly 20 years worth of work at Western labs.

Kang, a molecular virologist, started studying the way HIV reproduces after landing in London during the early 1990s. About 10 years ago, he turned his focus toward developing a vaccine — something that he first thought would be a relatively simply task.

"Turns out, it was a very challenging problem," he said.

With the first of three trial phases set to begin in January, best-case scenario would see Kang's product on the market in five years. His vaccine attacks the whole virus instead of attacking bits and pieces, which is the way vaccines in previous HIV trials worked.

The vaccine — billed by Western as the only HIV vaccine being developed in Canada — will be produced at plants in Maryland and Colorado with funding from Sumagen. The Korean-based pharmaceutical company established its Canadian headquarters at Western's research park in 2008 and has pumped about $50 million into Kang's research.

If the vaccine earns approval for distribution, Kang hopes it can be produced in Canada. Right now, he said, Canada doesn't have a manufacturing facility that meets the biosafety requirement.

Kang, who also is developing a treatment for hepatitis C, was grinning from ear-to-ear Tuesday as the upcoming trials were announced at UWO.

While HIV has been his key subject for many years, Kang said there's no one thing that drew him to the disease, expect maybe the number of people it affects.

"I like to save lives," he said. "I think we can save millions."

Clinical trials

- **Phase 1**: Double check the safety of the vaccine in humans, will involve about 40 HIV-positive volunteers.
- **Phase 2**: Measure immune responses, will involve about 600 HIV-negative volunteers in the high-risk category for infection.
- **Phase 3**: Measure the vaccine's ability to produce results, will involve about 6,000 HIV-negative volunteers in the high-risk category for infection.

People who text are more likely to lie: Study

KENDRA WONG
IN VANCOUVER

RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS

▶ Doing this could make you lie more.

Text messaging may be a more convenient mode of communication, but it may lead people to be more deceitful, according to a new study by UBC researchers.

The study involved 170 student brokers and buyers performing mock stock transactions in one of four ways: face-to-face or video, audio, or text chatting.

Researchers found that participants who received information via text message were 95 per cent more likely to report deception than if they had interacted via video; 31 per cent more likely to report deception compared to face-to-face; and 18 per cent more likely to report deception than audio.

Ronald Cenfetelli, professor at the Sauder School of Business at UBC and co-author of the paper, said he was surprised that people's reaction at being lied to differed depending on the medium.

"Participants were likely to be more angry when they were lied to via text messaging," he said.

TECHNOLOGY

Wi-Fi users on airlines' naughty list

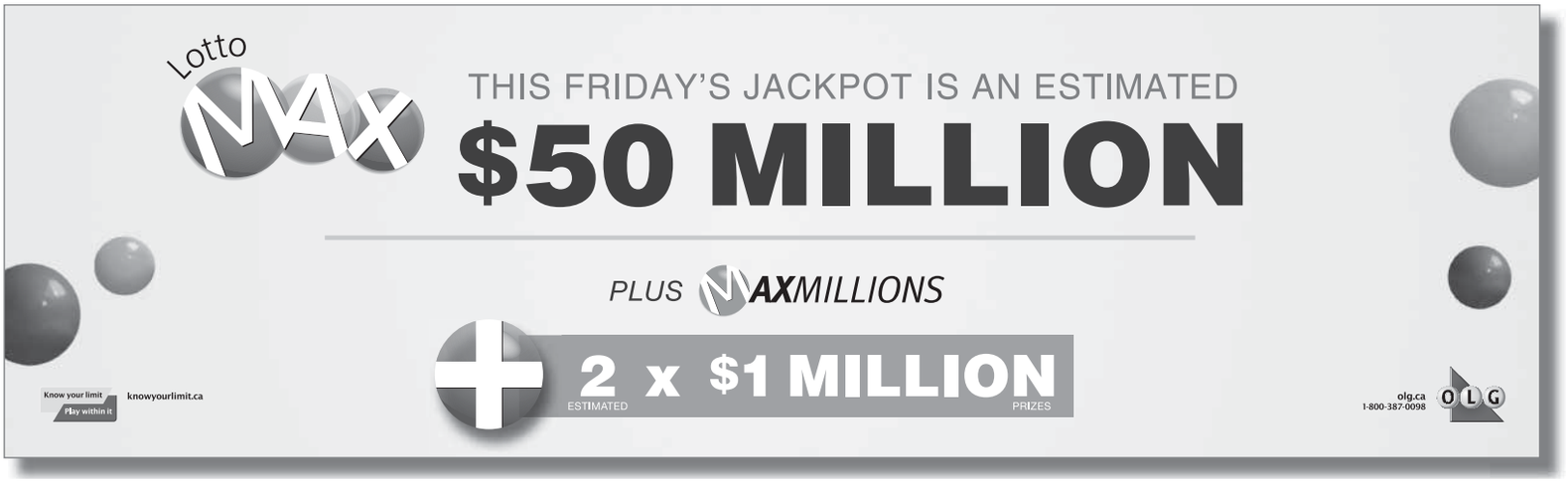
Naughty passengers who secretly use wireless devices while they fly shouldn't expect in-flight Internet to be deemed nice in Canada anytime soon.

Despite the fact that an Air Canada trial of onboard Wi-Fi on two planes has gone off without a hitch since 2010, the service is still prohibited in Canada — even though the practice has been widespread worldwide since 2009.

Transmitting devices are prohibited because they "might interfere" with navigation and communication systems, although different frequencies make their effects difficult to assess.

In-flight browsing is so appealing to travellers that 71 per cent would choose a flight with Wi-Fi access over one with meal service, according to a survey by the Wi-Fi Alliance.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



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Canadians in South Korea on edge after Kim's death

For 17 years, Kim Jong-il has been omnipresent, often threatening figure for South Koreans ◗ North and South Korea have long history of bloodshed

GETTY IMAGES

▶ Kim Jong-il lies in state in a glass coffin at the Kumsusan Memorial Palace in Pyongyang on Tuesday.

Though life goes on for those who live in South Korea, the death of North Korean leader Kim Jong-il has left some Canadians who live there with a sense of underlying nervousness.

Calgary native Craig White, who lives in Daegu, a city of more than 2.5 million people in southeastern Korea, said he thinks the North will want to display a show of strength, though his worries don't extend to a full-scale attack.

"I'm more worried about regime collapse, which would trigger an Asian economic crisis that would sink the regional economies for the next 10 years," said White, the managing editor of the multilingual newspaper in Daegu.

Kim Jong-il died Saturday at the age of 69 following what North Korea says was a massive heart attack caused by overwork and stress. Precious little is known about his son and successor, Kim Jong-un.

It's those unknowns that are the greatest source of anxiety.

"[Kim's son] might do something completely outside of the box, or he might completely surprise us."
MICHELLE VAN BALKOM, A KOREAN RESIDENT ORIGINALLY FROM PORT COQUITLAM, B.C.

Nakia Myers of Toronto, one of an estimated 330 Canadians in Daegu according to city data, said none of her colleagues at the Moon Kkang English Academy spoke of Kim's death when she arrived to work on Monday.

But Myers said she knew something was amiss as early as Saturday night when U.S. military personnel posted in Daegu had vanished from the downtown core.

"Whenever we don't see them, it signals that something is happening," Myers said. "But we never know about it and that's the thing that's kind of scary."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Engagement gets off to a flying start

SCOTT WETTON/HANDOUT/THE CANADIAN PRESS

▶ Scott Wetton hugs fiancée Jacqueline Poushay.

It was a high-stakes proposal that nabbed him a fiancée and turned him into a bit of an Internet star.

But it wasn't fame Scott Wetton was after when he secretly boarded an Air Canada flight from Calgary to Toronto on Dec. 16 to pop the question to his unsuspecting girlfriend as she flew home for the holidays.

"We started our relationship at long distance," Wetton, 26, said in an interview from his hometown of Toronto, where he is visiting family.

"We were constantly on planes flying back and forth ... so I thought it'd be a fun surprise for her."

The proposal — which was captured in a video posted on YouTube — took three months of planning and included false itineraries, an extra seat on the flight, a secret bag drop-off and a fake delay to allow Wetton to get on the plane with a little help from Air Canada staff.

Just after takeoff, Wetton took a deep breath, got on the intercom and hoped for the best.

"I know you don't like surprises, but I wanted this to be special," Wetton says in the video.

"Jacqueline, you're the love of my life and I wanted this to be as special as possible. I guess there's just one more question to ask."

When he made his way to his girlfriend's seat to finish the proposal, he had his answer — laughing and crying, Jacqueline Poushay said yes. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

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THE CANADIAN PRESS

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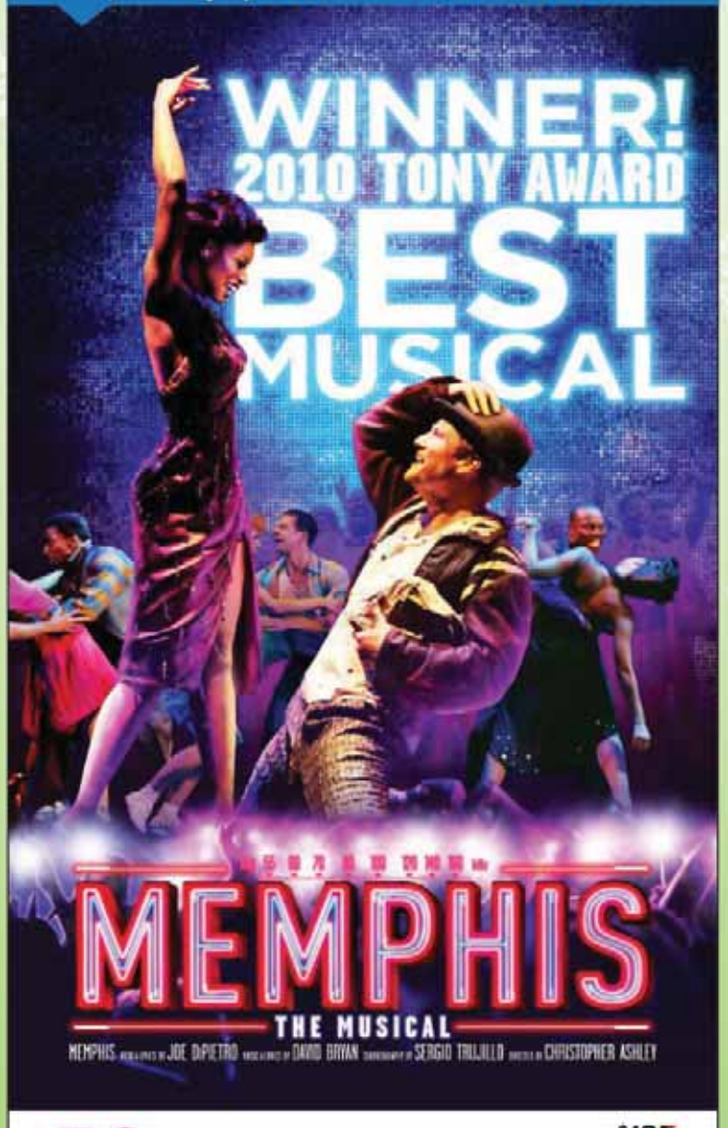

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Death toll rises even as Syria agrees to monitors

Syrian security forces pursuing anti-government activists and army defectors shot dead at least 47 people in Syria on Tuesday, pushing the toll for two days of violence to nearly 150 even as the regime agreed to admit foreign monitors under an Arab League plan.

Syrian state television showed pictures of military manoeuvres and said they were meant to show its forces are ready to "repulse any aggression the enemies of our nations might think about."

Human-rights groups said about 100 people were killed Monday, the same day Syria agreed to the monitors. About 70 of the dead were said to be army defectors. The groups said Tuesday's toll was at least 47, and possibly as high as 62.

The opposition is deeply skeptical that the agreement to allow the monitors in is anything other than stalling for time as international pressure grows on President Bashar Assad.

The U.S. said it will judge Syria by its actions. "We've seen too many broken promises from the Syrian regime. So we're less interested in a signed piece of paper than we are in actions to implement commitments made," State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The plan

- **The Arab League plan** calls for removing Syrian forces and heavy weapons from city streets, starting talks with opposition leaders and allowing human rights workers and journalists into the country, along with observers from member countries.
- **President Bashar Assad's** regime accepted the monitors after Arab leaders warned they would turn to the UN Security Council to try to end the crackdown that the UN says has killed at least 5,000 people since March.

MOHAMMED ABED/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

▶ Women shout slogans during a protest in Tahrir Square, Cairo, on Tuesday to denounce the military's attacks on women.

Egyptian women erupt in rage against rulers

Ruling generals express 'deep regret' for military's degrading attacks on female pro-democracy activists

About 10,000 women marched through central Cairo on Tuesday demanding that Egypt's ruling military step down. It was a rare and unprecedented show of outrage over soldiers who dragged women by the hair and stomped on them, and stripped one half-naked in the street during a fierce crackdown on activists over the past week.

Many of the marchers brandished the photo of the young woman whose clothes were partially pulled off by troops as she struggled on the ground.

"Tantawi stripped your women naked, come join us," the crowd chanted to passersby, referring to Field Marshal Hussein Tantawi, head of the ruling military council. "The daughters of Egypt are a red line," they chanted.

Even before the protest was over, the military council issued an unusually strong statement of "deep regret" for what it called "violations" against women, and promised to punish the soldiers responsible for the violence.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Scientists asked not to publish full bird flu research

The U.S. government is asking the journals Science and Nature as well as two top-flight research teams not to publish details of controversial studies on the bird flu virus, expressing concerns that the information could be put to ill purposes such as a bioterrorism attack.

The government asked the journals to publish only brief reports of the end result of the work, withholding the methods by which researchers managed to adapt the dangerous H5N1 virus to become easily transmissible.

Dutch virologist Ron Fouchier said he and his team feel a moral obligation to share the full study with other scientists.

Nature editor-in-chief Dr. Philip Campbell said he would discuss the request with colleagues before coming to a decision.

"It is essential for public health that the full details of any scientific analysis of flu viruses be available to researchers," he said in a statement. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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New planets challenge thoughts on how they form

Scientists have found two Earth-sized planets orbiting a star outside the solar system, an encouraging sign for prospects of finding life elsewhere.

The discovery shows that such planets exist and that they can be detected by the Kepler spacecraft, said Francois Fressin of the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics in Cambridge, Mass. They're the smallest planets found so far that orbit a star resembling our sun.

The planets, called Kepler-20e and Kepler-20f, are part of a five-planet system around the star, and their location challenges current understanding of how planets form, scientists said. In our own solar system, the small rocky planets are closest to the sun, while gaseous giants are on the periphery. But the five-planet system has no such dividing line; big and small planets alternate as one moves away from the star.

That's "crazy," and unexplained by current understanding of how planets form around stars, said study co-author and Harvard scientist David Charbonneau.

Earlier this month, scientists said they'd found a planet around another distant star with a life-friendly surface temperature of about 22 C. But it was too big to suggest life on its surface. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Year of hope until end of the world?

- Mayan regions start a year-long countdown today
- Maya priests will burn incense, chant, offer prayers

ISRAEL LEAL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

People celebrate in front of the Mayan ruins of Chichen Itza in Mexico, in this file photo.

Seize the day. Only 52 weeks and a day are left before Dec. 21, 2012, when some believe the Maya predicted the end of the world.

Unlike enthusiasts of other doomsday theories who suggest putting together survival kits, southeastern Mexico, the heart of Maya territory, plans a year-long celebration.

Mexico's tourism agency expects to draw 52 million visitors by next year only to the regions of Chiapas, Yucatan, Quintana Roo, Tabasco and Campeche. Mexico usually lures about 22 million foreigners in a year.

It's selling the date, the Winter Solstice, as a time of renewal. Many archeologists argue that the 2012 reference on a 1,300-year-old stone tablet only marks the end of a cycle in the Mayan calendar. "The world will not end. It is an era," said Yeanet Zaldo, a tourism spokeswoman for the Caribbean state of Quintana Roo, home to Cancun. "For us, it is a message of hope." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Mayans

- **The Mayan civilization,** which reached its height from 300 A.D. to 900 A.D., had a talent for astronomy.
- **Its Long Count calendar** begins in 3,114 B.C., marking time in roughly 394-year periods known as Baktuns.
- **The 13th Baktun** ends on Dec. 21, 2012, according to Mayan writings.

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TV dishes out cannibalism

Dutch presenters to eat a small chunk of one another's fried flesh Lawyer: Not expressly illegal

A Dutch broadcaster — renowned for testing the limits of good taste and the law — says it will air a segment in which two presenters engage in cannibalism by eating a small chunk of one another's fried flesh.

A BNN spokesman said Tuesday the men had each had a small piece of tissue surgically removed for the stunt — one from his side and the other from his buttocks.

Presenter Dennis Storm said in a press release that his motivation was a simple desire to know how human flesh tastes.

A teaser clip for the show Guinea Pigs, which airs Wednesday, shows the two men looking on as a chef fries tiny pieces of meat in a pan.

Gerard Spong, one of the country's best-known criminal defence lawyers, is participating in the program, and was quoted saying that cannibalism is not expressly illegal in the Netherlands.

However, "cutting and removing flesh from a healthy body without medical reason is illegal," Spong said. "Eating meat obtained in this way is ... punishable."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Won an Emmy

- **In 2007, BNN aired** a fake game show in which people who needed kidney transplants competed on live television for a supposedly terminally ill woman's kidney. The woman was an actress and the show was a hoax, but it was praised by some for raising awareness of the need for donors and went on to win an international Emmy award.
- **BNN, which targets a youth audience,** has previously aired programs such as Shooting and Swallowing in which presenters used illegal drugs and performed sex acts.

CONTRIBUTED

▶ Winnipeg's Maria Aragon appears in a Gap commercial.

Canadian content ranks high on YouTube

Canadian content ranked high on YouTube's lists of the most-watched videos in 2011 but still could not top the web phenomenon that was Rebecca Black's song Friday.

In second place on Canadian and international lists was Ultimate Dog Tease by Halifax's Andrew Grantham.

Third on Canada's list and eighth internationally was the cover of Lady Gaga's Born This Way by Winnipeg's Maria Aragon.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Overall, YouTube said it processed more than one trillion video views over the course of the year.

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Insurance rates rise again

Consumers shouldn't think twice about switching insurance companies

The rates charged by different insurance companies to insure the same driver, with the same car, for the same coverage, can vary by hundreds and even thousands of dollars. But, if you're like most consumers, you worry that switching insurance companies means losing your "loyalty discount."

The truth is that switching insurance companies may cause you to lose your loyalty discount (if you had one in the first place), but that doesn't necessarily mean you'll pay more for car insurance or that you can't save a bundle in the end. The fact is, some insurance companies may provide a small discount on your premium if you've been with them for a long time – but that small discount can quickly become irrelevant if another company has a rate for you that is significantly less than what you're currently paying. After all, what good is 5% off of an annual rate of $1,500 (a $75 savings) if you could pay $1,100 (a $400 savings) with another company?

With so many insurance companies providing car insurance in Ontario, odds are you are not currently insured with the company that offers the best rate for your driving profile. Insurance quoting sites like InsuranceHotline.com can help by providing an independent, unbiased rate comparison from its network of over 30 insurance companies to find you a lower rate available for your profile.

Sadly, the misguided fear of repercussions from their current insurer is what keeps many consumers from taking action and shopping around. The truth is that your insurance company has no way of knowing if you are shopping around for a better rate. In fact, even if they did know you were checking out your options, you cannot be penalized in any way for trying to find a better deal. And even if you don't find a better rate, at least you'll know where you stand.

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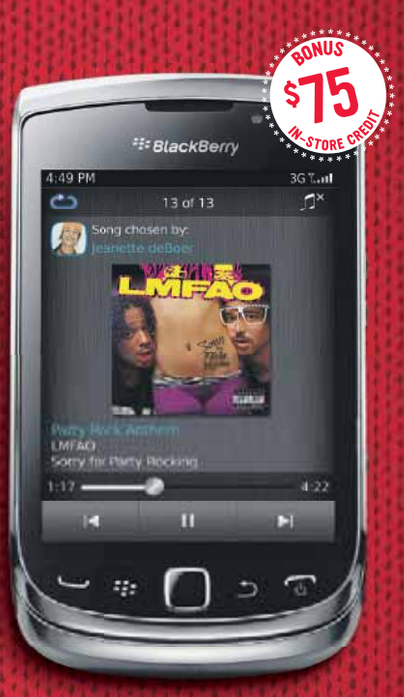

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Indonesia's punks resist crackdown

Mohawks buzzed and noses free of piercings, dozens of youths march in military-style for hours beneath Indonesia's tropical sun — part of efforts by authorities to restore moral values and bring the "deviants" back into the mainstream.

But the young men and women have shown no signs of bending.

When commanders turn their backs, the shouts ring out: "Punk will never die!" Fists are thrown in the air and peace signs flashed. A few have managed briefly to escape, heads held high as they are dragged back.

Sixty-five young punk rockers arrived at this police detention centre last week after baton-wielding police crashed a concert in Aceh — the only province in this predominantly Muslim nation of 240 million to have imposed Islamic laws.

They will be released Friday, after completing 10 days of "rehabilitation," from classes on good behaviour and religion to military-style drills aimed at instilling discipline.

HERI JUANDA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ An inscription on a pair of slippers sitting outside a mosque at a police school in Aceh, Indonesia.

Yudi, 19, who goes by only one name, says it's not working.

He tried unsuccessfully to shake off police when they took an electric razor to his spiky mohawk. At the sight of his hair scattered in the grass, he recalls, tears rolled down his face.

"They can't change me," he insisted. "I love punk. I don't feel guilty about my lifestyle. Why should I? There's nothing wrong with it."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Aceh's autonomy

- The crackdown marked the latest effort by authorities to promote strict moral values in Aceh, which, unlike other provinces in the sprawling archipelagic nation, enjoys semiautonomy from the central government.
- That was part of a peace deal negotiated after the 2004 tsunami off Aceh convinced separatist rebels and the army to lay down their arms.

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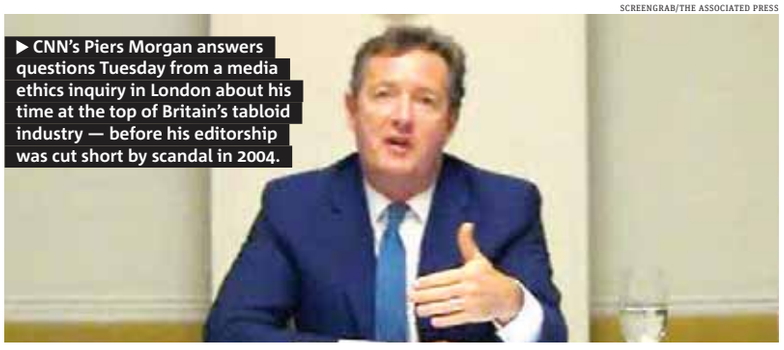

▶ CNN's Piers Morgan answers questions Tuesday from a media ethics inquiry in London about his time at the top of Britain's tabloid industry — before his editorship was cut short by scandal in 2004.

Piers sticks to guns

Celebrity interviewer rejects allegations about phone hacking, but refuses to discuss damning voice mail

A tense and sometimes confrontational Piers Morgan stood his ground before a judge-led British inquiry into media ethics Tuesday, denying any connection to illegal phone hacking which has resulted in the closure of the newspaper he once edited and the arrest of friends and former colleagues.

But the celebrity interviewer refused to answer questions about the most damning link between himself and the scandal — his 2006 acknowledgment that he had once listened to a poignant phone message left by former Beatle Paul McCartney for his ex-wife Heather Mills.

Morgan stubbornly refused to go into any detail about the message.

"I'm not going to discuss where I heard it or who played it to me," he told the inquiry via videolink from the U.S.

Pressed by inquiry chief Lord Justice Brian Leveson as to whether he could say anything to substantiate that he had obtained the message legally, Morgan said he could not.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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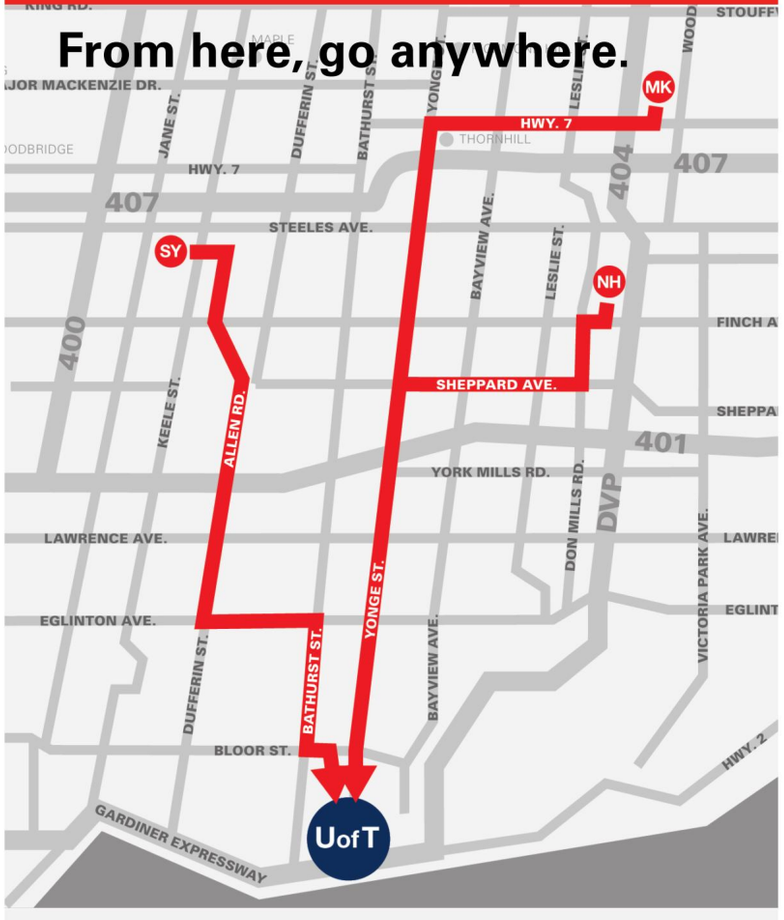

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Food, gas keep inflation high

Rate in Canada should average about 3% this year, economist says Highest over full year in two decades

Canada's annual inflation rate remained stubbornly high at 2.9 per cent last month as Canadians continued to pay considerably more for food and gasoline than 12 months earlier.

Statistics Canada said Tuesday that grocery prices were up 5.7 per cent in November compared with a year ago as consumers saw double-digit increases for such basics as fresh vegetables and bread. The figures included a 1.3 per cent jump from October alone.

Overall food prices, including restaurant meals, were 4.8 per cent higher than a year earlier, the biggest such increase since July 2009, the agency said.

November prices

UP:
- Shelter 1.5%
- Fuel oil 24.4%
- Car insurance 4.4%
- New cars 3.3%

DOWN:
- Home mortgage and interest 1.1%
- Natural gas 2.7%
- Video equipment 12.4%
- Women's clothing 2.1%
- Furniture 2.1%

Gasoline also continued to be a key driver of annual inflation, rising 13.5 per cent in November from 12 months earlier. However, gasoline price inflation is on a downward track after peaking in May at close to 30 per cent. On a month-to-month basis, Canadians actually paid 2.3 per cent less for gas in November than they did in October.

Statistics Canada said prices rose in every province in Canada, with the highest rate — 4.1 per cent — recorded in Newfoundland and Labrador.

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Market moment

PRICES AS OF 5 P.M. TUESDAY

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+ 177.18 (11,716.88)	+ 0.79¢ ($97.06¢ US)
Oil	**Natural gas**
+ $3.34 US ($97.22 US)	$3.128 (+ 3.2¢)
	Gold
	$1,617.60 (+ $20.90)

TransCanada buying solar projects

TransCanada Corp., known for its vast network of oil and gas pipelines, is making an entry into the solar-power business with the acquisition of nine Ontario projects for a total of $470 million.

The Calgary-based company said Tuesday it has agreed to buy the projects, with a combined capacity of 86 megawatts, from Canadian Solar Solutions. All have 20-year power purchase agreements with Ontario Power Authority.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

▶ Anthony Lacavera, chairman and CEO of Wind Mobile, suggests that new entrants will have to consolidate in 2012 as they get financially squeezed.

Killer discounts?

Wind Mobile, Mobilicity and Public Mobile are all discounting to some degree, says telecom analyst

Constant discounts in the mobile phone industry by new wireless companies can't last and will lead to consolidation, predicts the CEO of Wind Mobile.

"The reality is that everyone needs to be turning a profit to stay in business," said Anthony Lacavera, whose company just celebrated two years in the market.

Public Mobile made a similar prediction earlier, saying at least one of the two other new players — Wind or Mobilicity — would run out of money by the end of this year.

Telecom analyst Brahm Eiley, co-founder of the Convergence Consulting Group in Toronto, said the next auction of radio waves by the federal government, expected next year or in 2013, will show which of the new players has money to stay in the marketplace.

Lacavera said Wind Mobile will continue to roll-out its network next year, heading east to Halifax and west to Winnipeg, Regina and Victoria as well as Ottawa and Windsor.

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R.I.P. FEARLESS HITCHENS

JUST SAYIN' ...

PAUL SULLIVAN
METRO

It's tough, writing an appreciation of Christopher Hitchens, the brilliant essayist and author of God Is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything and the memoir Hitch 22, to name a couple.

Hitchens died last week, and an impressive array of pundits have tried to punch above their weight and write about Hitchens as well as Hitchens wrote about himself.

The results have been admirable, although we could do without the manly memoirs from those who tried to match the master drink for drink and stay on their barstools. Typical of this school is Graydon Carter, the editor of Vanity Fair, who wrote that after having more drinks at lunch than most of us have in a lifetime at lunch, they stumbled back to the office and Hitchens "produced a 1,000-word column of near perfection in under half an hour."

"When you're a writer, intellectual freedom is your most precious resource. Unless you write the truth (as you know it, in your heart) with complete fearlessness, you are producing weasel poop."

The other unsettling thing about the coverage is that it's universally by guys about a guy. Hitchens famously maintained that women aren't funny, and as far as I can tell, most women continue to hold that against him.

Otherwise, just about everything you could ever say, hope to say or imagine that someone, someday might say has been written about Christopher Hitchens. So why bother to add to the pile?

Maybe it's because, as Carter writes, "you felt as though he was writing to you and to you alone." We all had a front row seat to The Show thanks to Hitchens, who would tackle any topic on our behalf, from Mother Teresa, whom he detested as the benign, loving face of oppression, to Holocaust denier David Irving, tolerating him and his odious outlook in the name of intellectual freedom.

When you're a writer, intellectual freedom is your most precious resource. Unless you write the truth (as you know it, in your heart) with complete fearlessness, you are producing weasel poop. At best.

Hitchens was completely fearless. He proved it time and again, but most of all when he turned his back on the left to support the U.S. invasion of Iraq, arguing that "Islamofascism" is the greatest threat of our time. It started when the Ayatollah of Iran put a fatwah (a kind of assassination contract with religious trappings) on his good friend Salman Rushdie for writing The Satanic Verses.

If it weren't three sentences long, this quote about the fatwah from his memoir should be written on his tomb: "It was, if I can phrase it like this, a matter of everything I hated versus everything I loved. In the hate column: dictatorship, religion, stupidity, demagogy, censorship, bullying and intimidation. In the love column: literature, irony, humour, the individual and the defense of free expression."

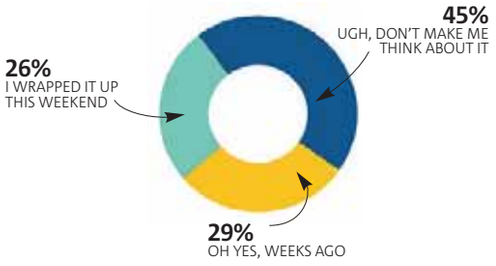
Christopher Hitchens, wherever you are, let 'er RIP.

Read more of Paul Sullivan's columns at metronews.ca/justsaying

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

Five days left. Have you finished your shopping?



Local tweets

- **@Justrunwitit:** Congrats to the University of Western Ontario for developing the newest and FDA approved HIV vaccine!
- **@ShakeelSalamath:** Anybody know what's going on at ACC? Lots of people with #Leafs jersey were heading down
- **@tweetashleylamb:** Fan night at #ACC. Watching them practice.. and boy they need it. Better win the nxt game #MapleLeafs. #Toronto #Sports
- **@vitoperri:** Philippe Dupuis placed on IR w/ an upper-body injury... THANK YOU SANTA!!!!!!!! #Leafs
- **@TorontoProbs:** Despite all of the little "problems", #Toronto is still, and will always be, one of the greatest cities in the World. RT if you agree!
- **@ShannonYYZ:** Today, I experienced several warm, spontaneous acts of kindness and generosity. I love Toronto and its people.

SHIKHEI GOH/NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Fly battles rain to win contest

WILDLIFE. It looks like one of those classic, endearing "Hang in there, baby" motivational posters. This dragonfly in Indonesia's Riau Islands seems to cling on to a reed to brave a torrent of rain. The photo by Shikhei Goh beat 20,000 entries to win the 2011 National Geographic Photography Contest. MWN

"It suddenly rained, but the lighting was just superb. The result caused me to be overjoyed."
SHIKHEI GOH, PHOTOGRAPHER

Judges' views

- **Amy Toensing:** "When I look at it, I want to say, 'Hold on tight, little buddy!'"
- **Peter Essick"** "It's rare indeed to see a photograph that causes the viewer to feel a bond with a member of the animal world seemingly, but maybe not, so unlike our own."

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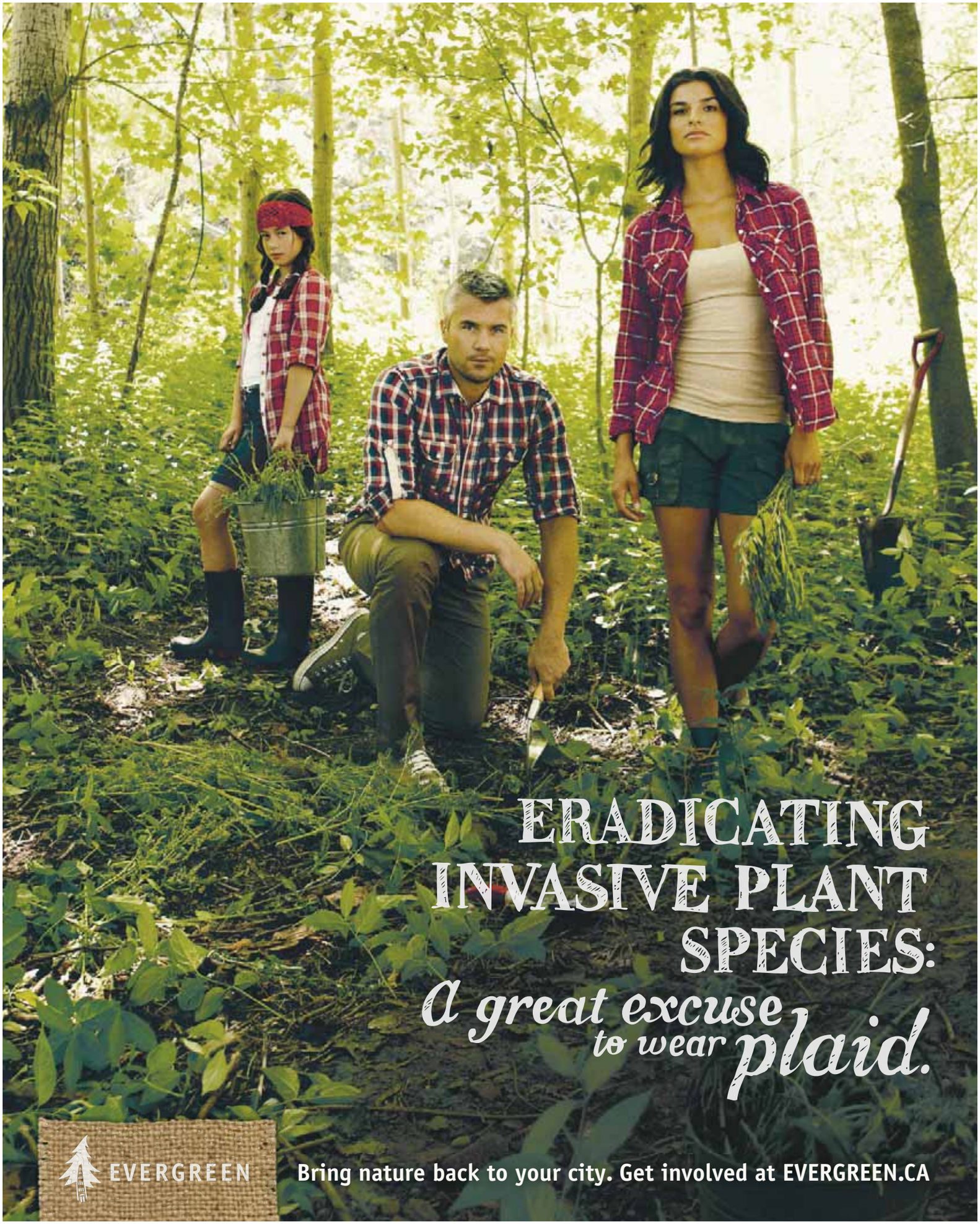
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50. Use your tree trimmings to make a homemade wreath.

51. Looking for a SIGNATURE DRINK for your party? Consider a "67 Punch"- For a single serving, FILL A GOBLET WITH ICE, add 1 oz. ginger-infused simple syrup (3/4 oz. simple syrup with 1/4 oz. ginger juice), and 2 oz. Cloudy apple juice, top with Molson Canadian 67. Garnish with an apple slice.†

52. Turn a couple of old tennis rackets into a set of SNOWSHOES.

53. Store a snowball in your FREEZER and SURPRISE SOMEONE in the SUMMER.

54. Wrap a SMALL gift in a huge box. Then wrap that in an EVEN BIGGER one.

55. MOST PEOPLE say their NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS will be about weight loss and dieting.** Ask Santa for a home treadmill and avoid overcrowded gyms in January

56. FORGET THE HALLS. DECK THE DECK.

57. Do next year's HOLIDAY SHOPPING on this year's BOXING DAY.

Follow the rest of our list in upcoming issues.

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Must be legal drinking age. *Calculations based on average serving (6 oz glass of wine and single serving of mixed drink). Details at molsoncanadian67.ca
**Source: Metropolitan Panel. 462 English, 154 French respondents. December 2011. †Recipe provided by Martini Club of Toronto, December 2011.

A Swedish invasion

The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo has spurred a demand for Scandinavian backdrops in new films ◐ But that's nothing new to Hollywood ◐ Sweden has always been a cinema focal point

IN FOCUS

RICHARD CROUSE
SCENE@METRONEWS.CA

These days it seems there are almost as many movies set in Sweden as there are Billy bookshelves in college dorms. The original Girl with the Dragon Tattoo books and movie series kicked off a thirst for all things Scandinavian.

Headhunters, a Norwegian noir, was a big hit recently at the Toronto International Film Festival and Let the Right One In placed vampires against a snowy, stark white Swedish backdrop.

This weekend the Americanized version of Girl With the Dragon Tattoo opens, starring Daniel Craig and Rooney Mara in the roles Swedish superstars Michael Nyqvist and Noomi Repace made famous. Shot in Sweden, the movie promises open landscapes, the crunch of snow underfoot and even the odd fjord.

Suddenly, it seems people are hungry for movies from Sweden, Norway and Denmark, but there has always been a smorgasbord of cinema available from that part of the world.

No discussion of Scandinavian cinema can be complete without mentioning Ingmar Bergman. Woody Allen named him "the greatest film artist since the invention of the motion picture camera," and Francis Ford Coppola called him "my all-time favourite."

If you haven't seen The Seventh Seal or Wild Strawberries, you should; they are both classics. But you have undoubtedly seen movies inspired by or parodying Bergman's work.

His famous Seventh Seal scene of Death playing chess has been mimicked in everything from Bill & Ted's Bogus Journey to Woody Allen's play Death Knocks, which features a man playing gin rummy with Death.

More recently a Norwegian mockumenary called Troll Hunter earned praise from critics all over the world. One writer said this Blair-Witch-style story of cave-dwelling trolls and the government-sponsored hunters who track them was "destined to be a classic of its kind."

Another said, "You'll want to catch this clever movie before Hollywood ruins everything with a dumb remake."

Denmark has a thriving film industry. Since 1956 they've entered 40 flicks for Best Foreign Film consideration at the Academy Awards.

At last year's Oscars Susanne Bier's drama In a Better World beat Canada's entry Incendies to take home Best Foreign Film.

The best-known Danish films of recent years have been made by Lars von Trier, the distinctive and controversial director of Breaking the Waves and this year's Melancholia. As well known for his depressed behaviour as he is for his films, Von Trier once said, "Basically, I'm afraid of everything in life, except filmmaking."

HANDOUT

▶ The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo has set off a demand for all things Scandinavian.

2 scene

Not dead

False reports of Jon Bon Jovi's death spread online after a fake news release surfaced on social media sites. Bon Jovi released a statement Tuesday showing that he is very much still alive.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Judge shifts legal, other expenses from executors of Michael Jackson's estate

Green Day come around

- Rock musical American Idiot comes to Toronto
- Tells the story of three disaffected suburbanites

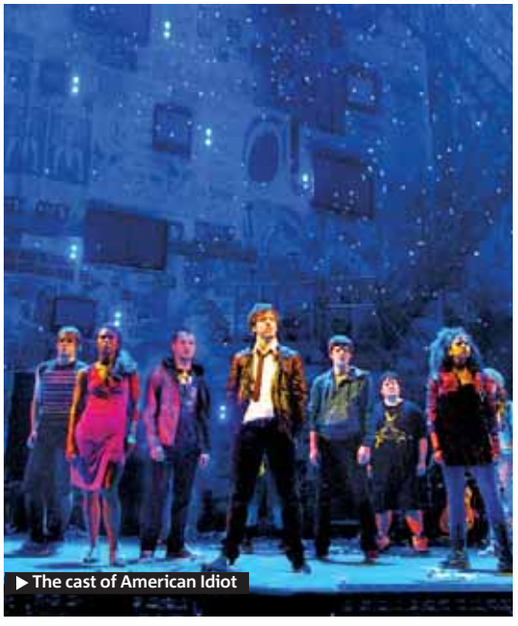
Stage Notes

JONATHAN NAYMARK
SCENEOPOLIS.COM

Opening just after Christmas and direct from Broadway is a musical inspired by the iconic rock band Green Day and their 2004 concept album, American Idiot.

The rock-musical uses almost all of the music from the 2004 album as it weaves together a familiar story of suburban Americana.

DOUG HAMILTON



▶ The cast of American Idiot

American Idiot follows the lives of three disaffected suburbanite friends, Johnny, Will and Tunny, who decide to travel to the big city in search of meaning beyond their current apathetic state.

Singing some of the iconic songs from Green Day's album, including: Boulevard of Broken Dreams, Holiday and the titular track, Johnny, Will and Tunny find hope through love.

American Idiot kicks off its touring production at the Toronto Centre for the Arts.

It's a rock 'n' roll musical that Green Day fans as well as lovers of innovative Broadway musicals won't want to miss.

Save 25 per cent on tickets to American Idiot with sceneopolis.com.

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Movie reviews See it twice ⊕⊕⊕⊕⊕ | See it now ⊕⊕⊕⊕
Worth watching ⊕⊕⊕ | Yawn ⊕⊕ | Don't bother ⊕

HANDOUT

THE ADVENTURES OF TINTIN
Genre: Drama
Director: Steven Spielberg
⊕⊕⊕½

Based on three of Hergé's original Tintin books, The Adventures of Tintin is a long series of clues strung together to form the story and connect the action scenes.

But despite the well-loved characters and Andy Serkis's brilliant work, this is a Steven Spielberg movie through and through.

Using a mix of motion capture and CGI he is finally able to recreate the giant set pieces he has always been fond of in boldface.

The motorcycle chase through a North African town, a plane crash in the desert and a swashbuckling flashback are all spectacular, exhilarating sequences, but they feel more Spielbergian than Tintin-ian.

I'm not sure if Hergé purists will appreciate the director's vision imposed on their beloved characters but for everyone else The Adventures of Tintin is good, escapist fun.

RICHARD CROUSE

DOWNTOWN

YONGE-EGLINTON CENTRE
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 11:45-2:15-5:7:30-10:25

YONGE & DUNDAS 24
The Adventures of Tintin (PG) Wed-Thu 10:45-1:30-4:15-7:8:45-9:45
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) Wed-Thu 11:45-2:30-5:15-8:10:45 Wed-Thu 11:15-2-4:45-7:30-10:15
The Adventures of Tintin: An IMAX 3D Experience (PG) Wed-Thu 1-3:45-6:30-9:15

WEST END

QUEENSWAY
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 1:30-4:15-6:55-9:35

NORTH YORK

SHEPPARD GRANDE
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 4:10-7:10-10

SILVERCITY YORKDALE 6
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 1:05-4:10-7:15-10:20

SILVERCITY FAIRVIEW
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 12-2:35-5:10-7:45-10:20

SCARBOROUGH

COLISEUM SCARBOROUGH
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 12:15-2:50-5:35-8:15-10:55

EGLINTON TOWN CENTRE
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 4:05-6:40-9:20

401 & MORNINGSIDE
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 4:30-7:10-9:55

PEEL REGION

COURTNEY PARK 16
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) Tue 12:01 Wed-Thu 2-4:30-7:15-10
The Adventures of Tintin: An IMAX 3D Experience (PG) Wed-Thu 2:30-5:15

ORION GATE GRANDE
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 4:10-6:50-9:40

SILVERCITY MISSISSAUGA
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 3:35-6:20-9:05

SQUARE ONE
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating Wed-Thu 1-3:45-7-9:45

NORTH

5 DRIVE-IN
The Adventures of Tintin (PG) Thu 7:40

AURORA CINEMAS
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Thu 6:40-9:45

COLOSSUS 19
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 11:30-2:15-5:10-7:50-10:25

ELGIN MILLS 10
The Adventures of Tintin (PG) Wed-Thu 6-8:50

FIRST MARKHAM PLACE
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 7-9:45

SILVERCITY NEWMARKET
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 4:45-7:30-10:15

SILVERCITY RICHMOND HILL
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed 4:05-7:05-10 No Passes Thu 1:10-4:05-7:05-10

HALTON

GALAXY CINEMAS MILTON
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 6:30-9:25

SILVERCITY BURLINGTON 8
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 7:05-9:40

SILVERCITY OAKVILLE
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 6:50-9:20

DURHAM

AJAX
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 7:30-10:15

PICKERING 8
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 5:45-8:30

WHITBY 24
The Adventures of Tintin (PG) Special Engagement Wed-Thu 11:55-2:30-5:15-8-10:30
The Adventures of Tintin 3D (PG) Special Engagement Wed-Thu 10:15-1-4:15-7-9:30
The Adventures of Tintin: An IMAX 3D Experience (PG) Special Engagement Wed-Thu 11-1:30-4:15

A look at odds and ends of music in 2011 with best hook, best comeback and best music video

Who rocked 2011?

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

▶ Beyoncé performs on ABC's Good Morning America, in New York in July.

Sure, everyone has their list of top albums. But how do you rank the things that really resonated in pop music this year — like Nicki Minaj's ubiquity, the best song you were embarrassed to sing out loud, and the top return of the year? Here's a spotlight on some of music's other highlights.

Beyoncé

This diva released a whopping seven music videos in six months, and honestly, most of them are average.

▶ **Still got it:** But Beyoncé is a killer on the dance floor, and in the Run the World (Girls) clip, her moves are infectious and mind-blowing.

Best guilty pleasure song: Tonight, Tonight AND I Like It Like That by Hot Chelle Rae.

Best use of Nicki Minaj: Last year, Nicki Minaj costarred on many songs, but this year she focused more on her solo efforts. Her best guest appearance is on David Guetta's Turn Me On, a future hit that highlights the rapper's singing chops.

Best unreleased track: Frank Ocean's Thinking About You did not appear on his free album and it was never supposed to be a single.

He recorded a demo of the song for singer Bridget Kelly, but his version is personal and perfect, with its Maxwell-esque falsetto breakdown.

Best inane lyric: Insert LMFAO song here.

▶ Trey Songz, left, and Kelly Rowland perform at the BET Awards in Los Angeles in June.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Best award show performance
Kelly Rowland's live rendition of Motivation at the BET Awards reminded viewers that training alongside Beyoncé for years has a plus-side: Rowland's vocals were crisp and her sexy dance moves helped her come off like a contemporary version of Janet Jackson.

Best Katy Perry single:
Katy Perry has a slew of No.1 hits, but her best song this year was the Ke$ha-sounding party jam Last Friday Night (T.G.I.F.)

It's hard not to love lyrics like: "Think I need a Ginger Ale/that was such an epic fail."

Best music video:
Swedish singer Lykke Li is hauntingly amazing in her video for I Follow Rivers, filmed on a snowy, deserted island.

It's cinematic, dramatic and classic, and by far the best music video of 2011.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

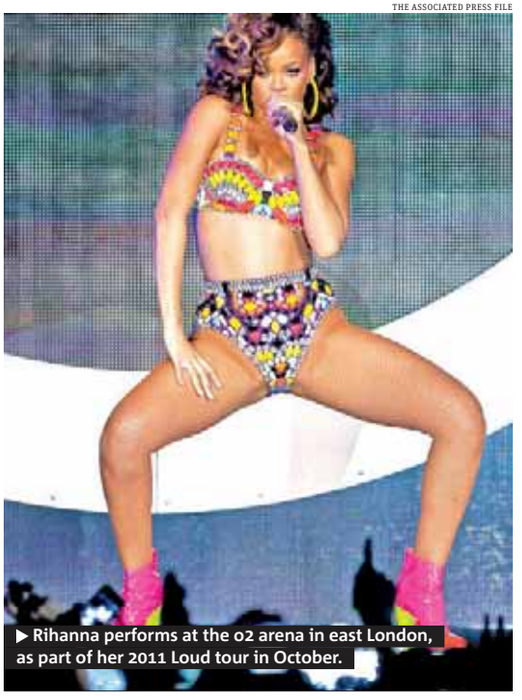
▶ Adele performs at the 2011 Brit Awards at The O2 Arena in London.

Best remix:
Adele and reggae? No way! But Jamie xx's remix of the British singer's Rolling In the Deep — dubbed Rolling In the Heat — is fun, epic and sweat-inducing.

Best comeback: While some people were impressed with Chris Brown's rap on Look at Me Now, it was Busta Rhymes who stole the show with his fantastic flow. Did I just rhyme? Oh snap! Anyway, it was a tease and has everyone wondering: When is that album coming out, Busta?!

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE



▶ Rihanna performs at the o2 arena in east London, as part of her 2011 Loud tour in October.

Best Hook: The chorus of Rihanna's S&M is downright nasty, so we can't repeat it here, but it's downright catchy, too. Na, na, na, na, c'mon!

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Demi Moore wants to empower you

The Conversation, Demi Moore's new talk show on which she serves as the Executive Producer, is on schedule to air next month on Lifetime with British TV personality Amanda De Cadenet as host.

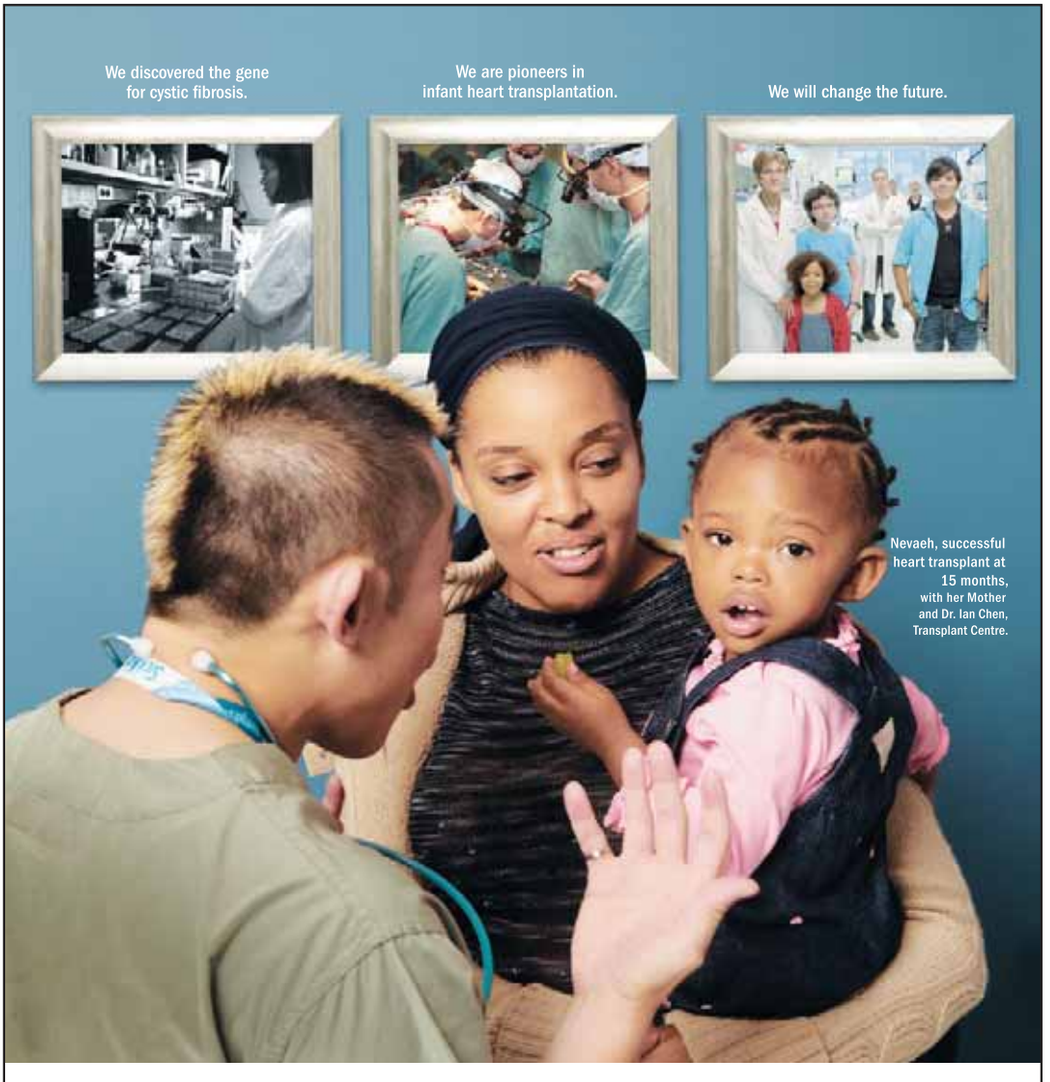
The Conversation, which claims to be about empowering women, has already nabbed such guests as Lady Gaga, Gwyneth Paltrow, Olivia Wilde and Jane Fonda.

Apparently, they plan on "empowering women" by asking these extremely successful women such questions as "What is your favourite sex position?" and "What do you lie about?"

Maybe instead of such inane questions, The Conversation would empower females better if these celebs talked to women about the importance of education, birth control, and how to fight sexism in the work place.

Besides, everyone knows that for Gwyneth Paltrow, the answer is "missionary." DOROTHY ROBINSON

▶ Demi Moore



Discoveries lead to recoveries.

Recoveries in children like Nevaeh, who developed a life-threatening heart condition and received a transplant that saved her life. The work done at SickKids is making a real difference in the lives of children. Countless hours of research, caring staff and state-of-the-art facilities contribute to recoveries like Nevaeh's. But we do need your support. Your donation will help to realize our vision: Healthier Children. A Better World.™

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Was James Franco a D-student at university?

Former New York University professor Jose Angel Santana claims the school fired him for giving James Franco a D, and he's suing to get his job back, according to the New York Post.

Santana claims the low grade was due to Franco missing 12 out of 14 classes, though he says the school sided with their famous student.

"In my opinion, they've turned the NYU graduate film degree into swag for James Franco's purposes, a possession, something you can buy," Santana tells the newspaper.

"The University has done everything in its power to curry favour with James Franco." METRO

James Franco

Celebrity tweets

Death to LOL
@BrunoMars

@oliviawilde
Is it wrong that the only time I've been in the gym in the last month is to buy peanut butter smoothies? I try my best to lunge in and out.

@michaelianblack
If anybody (Jude Law) wants to trade lives with me, NO THANK YOU!!! (yes, please)

@ZooeyDeschanel
this weather just makes me feel like eating.

Lies, all lies, says Scarjo

British newspaper the Mirror has suggested that Scarlett Johansson is dating musician Dan White of the band Tribes after meeting earlier this month while she films a new movie in London, but Johansson says they're pretty far off.

"I've never heard of him, I've never met him, and I've never listened to his band," she tells Us Weekly. METRO

▶ Scarlett Johansson

Lady and the Trump

Just how has Lady Gaga become the global sensation she is today? Why, taste-maker Donald Trump, of course

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

▶ Lady Gaga

THE WORD

DOROTHY ROBINSON
SCENE@METRONEWS.CA

Toupéed reality TV star Donal Trump says because Lady Gaga performed at the 2008 Miss Universe pageant, which Trump owns, he should get all of the credit for her success.

"We always have an entertainer," he says.

"We've had a lot of great people, and you don't pay them anything because it's one of the biggest audiences and my people told me, 'Nobody knows who she is but there's this woman with good talent named Lady Gaga.'

And I said, 'Give me a break.' And then they said, 'She's really good.' So I said, 'I don't care, if you like her, put her on.'"

Interesting. And here we always thought it was the gays who propelled Lady Gaga to international stardom. Did Donald Trump also discover Key West?

▶ Donald Trump

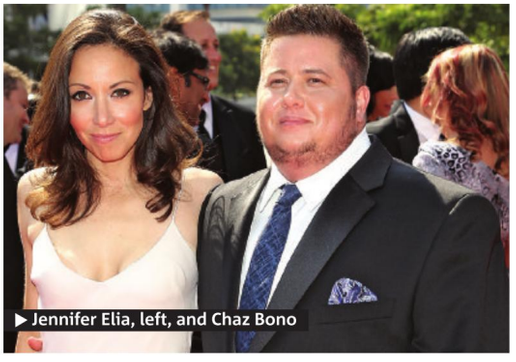
I ain't got you babe: Chaz and his fiancée split

After featuring their tear-filled proposal on his reality series, Being Chaz, Chaz Bono and Jennifer Elia have split up, calling off their engagement, according to TMZ.

"They leave this relationship with great love, respect and affection toward one another.

No further amplification will be forthcoming and they ask that you respect their privacy at this time," says a rep for the former Dancing with the Stars contestant.

METRO


▶ Jennifer Elia, left, and Chaz Bono

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Travel in brief

Eight casinos on the Las Vegas Strip are planning a co-ordinated fireworks show as part of Sin City's annual New Year's Eve celebration. Officials said Wednesday that more than 56,000 effects will light up the sky as part of a nearly nine-minute show featuring a medley of songs including LMFAO's Party Rock Anthem.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cancun rated cheapest Caribbean destination, Saint Barthelemy the priciest

Tired of the dreariness of winter and in need of some sunshine? Welcome to Mexico's seaside town of Puerto Vallarta There's more than just sunny days in this port town

Pacific Paradise

BRENDA NUNEZ
LIFE@METRONEWS.CA

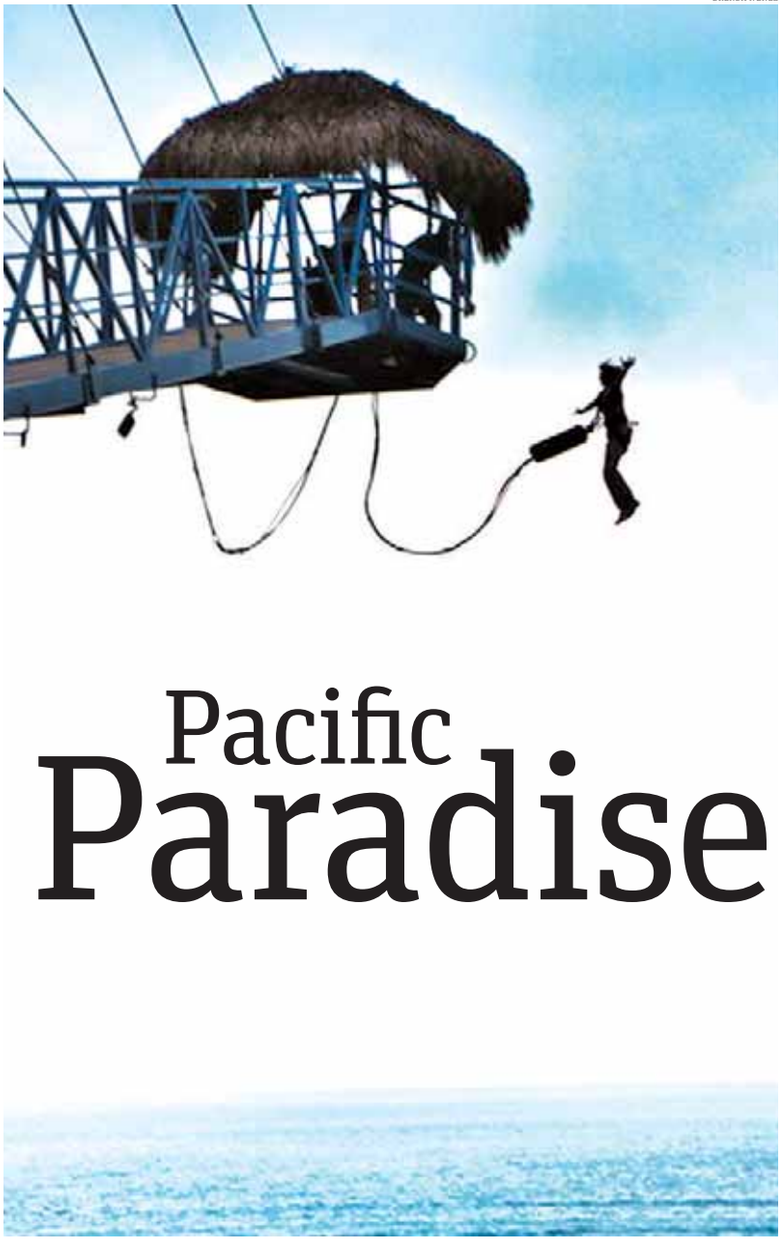
'Vallarta', as locals call it, is a quaint village nestled in Banderas Bay that opens out into the Pacific Ocean. One of Mexico's most cosmopolitan cities, it's also the country's gay capital. Blessed with year round warm temperatures, the sparkling seaside town is a breath of fresh air compared to the capital Mexico City.

A hot spot for sea and art lovers, there is beauty in everything you see from the red tiled houses, cobbled streets and ocean views. Although a major tourist destination, Vallarta has managed to stay clear of clichés and remains in essence a quiet fishing village.

First time?

On top of the endless stretch of pristine coastline, there are plenty of outdoor activities to keep you busy here. Go horseback riding along the coast, deep sea diving or fishing or for a jeep ride through the jungle. Bring some binoculars so you can do a bit of bird watching at the same time. If you're brave enough, go bungee jumping into the ocean (vallarta-adventures.com).

BRENDA NUÑEZ



Shop

The best place to buy local souvenirs is the historic Rio Cuale Market near the Cuale River. Here you will find plenty of Huichol culture arts and crafts as well as mainstream beach dresses and wrestling masks. Shopping malls, including Galerias Vallarta Maritime and the Plaza Peninsula, are great for getting more generic souvenirs. If it's jewelry and antiques you're after, go for a stroll along the Malecón boardwalk.

BRENDA NUÑEZ

▶ Market crafts

Eat and drink!

For a traditional breakfast, head to Mama Rosa (mamarosavallarta.com). Their refried beans, empanadas and café de olla (cinnamon coffee) are the perfect start to the day. El Brujo is another option, especially if you like molcajetes (steak, onions and white cheese in pepper sauce, with flour tortilla, beans and guacamole).

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Kick back in Cabo

Cabo San Lucas isn't just a party spot There are plenty of low-key places that don't involve night clubs

THE TRAVELLIN' CANADIAN

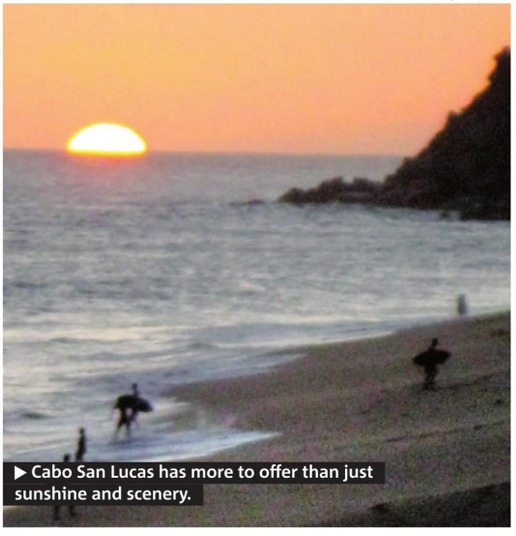
DARREN PARKMAN
TRAVEL@METRONEWS.CA

On my way down to Mexico's Cabo San Lucas, I recalled all the things I'd heard about this little bit of paradise tucked away on the tip of the Baja peninsula. Sure, I'd heard gorgeous, scenic and sunny, but I'd also heard crowded, commercialized and expensive.

What I actually found was nothing like I expected. Yes, when it comes to nightlife, parts of Cabo can be a bit over the top. Downtown, I discovered the gong show club known as El Squid Row, and then there's Cabo Wabo, where I was greeted with a large mob of young, loud, and somewhat polluted partiers drinking six dollar cervazas, and even more expensive margaritas.

Moving on , I soon stumbled on an unassuming little oasis just off the beaten path. It was a little outdoor joint called Cabo Blue. Now, this was more my speed, and more importantly, it appealed to my cheap side. I was astounded that this joint served…one dollar beers! You read right. Frosty cervezas for a measly buck! Amazing to think in this day and age you can have drinks and a great night out for only $10. Or in my case, $15. Or was it $20?

DARREN PARKMAN/METRO NEWS



▶ Cabo San Lucas has more to offer than just sunshine and scenery.

Other cool things in Cabo

- **Swim with the dolphins:** You can interact with these playful creatures who will swim next to you and do acrobatic tricks.
- **Kayak the Arch:** Take a kayak tour through one of the most famous rock formations in the world. The granite arch is located at the south end of the Baja Peninsula where the Sea of Cortez meets the Pacific.

Staying with that low-key laid-back vibe, I stayed at the very new Grand Solimar resort. No loud poolside bingo games or drunken conga lines at this place. Just great food and one of the nicest beaches I've seen in Mexico!

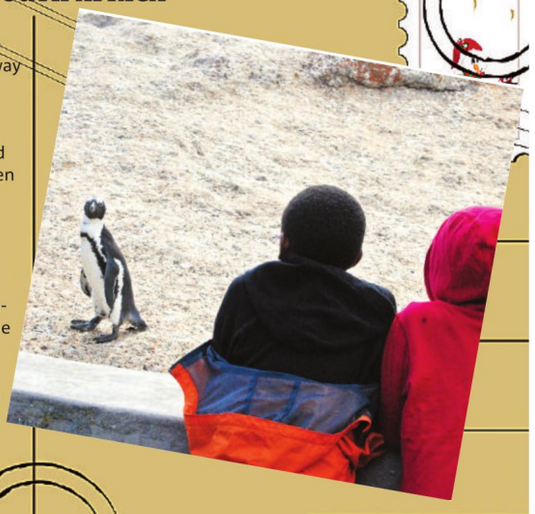
To cap off a hard day of lounging I headed to Medano beach to a funky little eatery called The Office. Not many places I can think of where you can enjoy a chicken enchilada while dipping your toes in the ocean. The open air tables are that close to the water. Sure, parts of Cabo can resemble spring break in Cancun, but there's plenty of places to kick back and relax and just take it easy amigos.

Postcards from the planet

HEATHER GREENWOOD DAVIS
GLOBETROTTINGMAMA.COM

SIMON'S TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA
DEC. 17, 2011

The drive along the Cape Peninsula was far and away one of the best scenic drives we've ever taken. Craggy cliffs, bright blue skies, crashing waves and white sandy beaches often littered with brightly coloured cottages. Stunning. But, without a doubt, the stars of the show were on Boulders Beach. South African Penguins call the beach home and the boys got a kick out of watching them waddle up and down the beach. From the looks of it the penguins were enjoying the boys just as much.



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Island fit for an Empress

Martinique has a rich history as the former home of Napoleon Bonaparte's Empress Josephine Think of it as a tropical France

MARTINIQUE PROMOTION BUREAU/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ It's easy to feel decadent swimming and sunbathing on the beaches of Martinique.

Even now, Paris feels a world away from this tropical paradise.

How much farther the immense capital must have seemed to Marie-Josephe-Rose Tascher de la Pagerie, a teenager on a remote sugar plantation with an improbable future. "You will be queen," a fortune-teller told her, according to the local legend.

Indeed, she would leave this southeast Caribbean island and rise through French society through the last days of its monarchy, the French Revolution and Reign of Terror to marry Napoleon Bonaparte, who would crown her Empress Josephine.

Josephine's humble beginnings on Martinique are explored here in a museum, the Domaine de la Pagerie, just outside the resort village of Les Trois-Ilets, named for three little islands just off shore.

When Josephine lived here in the mid-18th century, Martinique was a French colony. Her family owned more than 200 slaves on their plantation south of the capital, now called Fort-de-France, and the songs sung by these slaves and their descendants in Martinique's sugar cane fields are now performed by professional musicians and dancers wearing bright Madras plaids in luxury hotels.

Just the foundation of their "great house" remains, a modest stone square set in a green field of grass under the gaze of a white stone bust of Josephine.

The original house, set atop a small hill with a view of its fields in the valley below, was blown down in a hurricane when Josephine was not much more than a toddler. Financial problems kept her parents from rebuilding, so the family moved into the upper quarters of the property's sugar factory.

The legacy of slavery still tarnishes Josephine's reputation in Martinique. Many still blame her for Napoleon's reinstitution of slavery when France regained control of its colonies from the British, even though it's unclear whether Josephine influenced that decision. It certainly would have benefited her family, members of the island's wealthy elite who have considerable land holdings to this day.

There's nothing subtle about the condition of the statue of Josephine in the main square in Fort-de-France, where the intimidating stone fort still looms over cruise ships and ferries in the harbour. The white stone figure is regal in a flowing, low-cut gown, but it was vandalized years ago — beheaded, red paint splattered down the white dress and Josephine's name struck from the pedestal.

Martinique is a department of France. French is the official language and the euro is the official currency.

But its cuisine — French staples spiced with curry, fresh seafood, tropical fruits — is flavoured by what's grown locally along with the mix of African and Indian dishes brought to the island over the centuries. The covered market in the heart of Fort-de-France has packs of spices and vials of vanilla for sale.

Visitors to Martinique can experience tropical splendour at the Jardin de Balata, a botanical garden perched in the hills above Fort-de-France. A paved walkway winds its way through bromeliads, orchids, palms, flowering trees and a cluster of the Balisier flower, the flower of Martinique, a red blossom that looks something like a Bird of Paradise. A rope suspension bridge offers a more daring view of the lush tropical foliage.

Farther north along Martinique's Caribbean side are the black sand beaches around the small town of Saint-Pierre, built around the ruins left by a volcano that smoked through Josephine's lifetime and finally erupted in 1902.

Off the island's Atlantic coast are the "baths of Josephine," shallow turquoise waters where the young, would-be empress swam, according to local legend. It's hard not to feel a bit decadent swimming in these waters.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MARTINIQUE PROMOTION BUREAU/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ Visitors can enjoy Martinique's tropical splendour at Balata Garden.

If you go...

- **Getting there:** Air France flies to Fort-de-France from Miami. American Airlines flies to Fort-de-France through San Juan, Puerto Rico. Flights can be pricier to Martinique than to some of the other islands frequented by North Americans.
- **Travel tips:** Think of Martinique as tropical France. You'll be spending euros, and speaking French is widely expected.
- **For more information:** martinique.org

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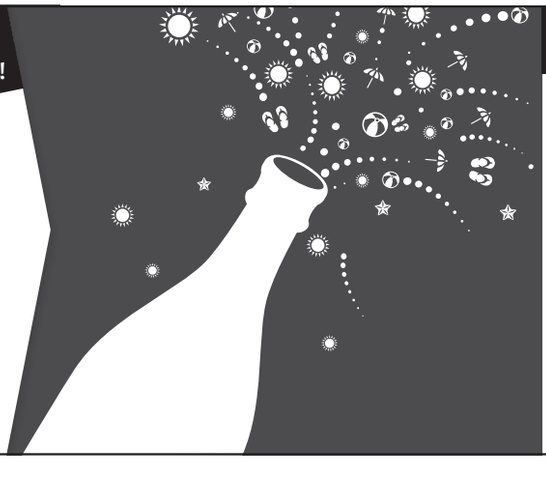

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A sweet ending to the holidays

This unique upside down cake is a nice escape from your typical frosted Christmas treats

EMILY RICHARDS

▶ This recipe serves 12.

HOLIDAY HELPER

EMILY RICHARDS
FOOD@METRONEWS.CA

This stunning cake brings the sweet and vanilla scented flavour of birch syrup to pears, and it would work just as well with firm baking apples.

The dark colour of pure birch syrup enhances the cake and adds a unique flavour. Try it in other baking where you would use vanilla extract as a start.

You can make this cake ahead up to two days and warm it up slightly before serving it with a dollop of whipped cream and a sprinkle of cinnamon

Ingredients:

- ½ cup (125 mL) butter, softened
- ¾ cup (175 mL) packed brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 tbsp (15 mL) vanilla
- 1-1/2 cups (375 mL) all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp (5 mL) ground cardamom or cinnamon
- 1 tsp (5 mL) baking powder
- ½ tsp (2 mL) baking soda
- Pinch salt
- ½ cup (125 mL) sour cream

Pear Topping:

- ⅓ cup (75 mL) pure birch syrup
- ¼ cup (50 mL) packed brown sugar
- ¼ cup (50 mL) chopped toasted pecans
- 3 ripe Bosc or Bartlett pears

Preparation:

1 Pear Topping: In saucepan, heat birch syrup, brown sugar over medium-high heat until it begins to bubble. Boil gently for 1 minute, stirring. Pour into greased 9-inch (23 cm) cake pan. Sprinkle with pecans.

2 Peel, quarter and core pears. Slice pears into about ¼ inch (5 mm) thick slices, lengthwise. Arrange over maple mixture in concentric circles overlapping each other slightly. Set aside.

3 In bowl, beat butter and sugar until fluffy. Add eggs one at a time, beating after each addition. Beat in vanilla. In another bowl, combine flour, cardamom, baking powder, soda and salt. Alternately, stir flour mix and sour cream into butter mix making 3 additions of flour and 2 of sour cream until combined (batter will be thick).

4 Scrape into cake pan over pears. Smooth batter carefully without moving pears. Bake in 350°F (180°C) oven 40 mins. or until tester inserted in centre comes out clean. Let cool in pan 20 mins.

5 Invert cake pan onto serving plate and turn over, removing cake pan. Scrape any pear topping from the pan onto cake.

EMILY RICHARDS IS A PROFESSIONAL HOME ECONOMIST, COOKBOOK AUTHOR & TV CELEBRITY CHEF. FOR MORE, VISIT EMILYRICHARDSCOOKS.CA

Holiday prep

We're here to help

This is the final edition of Emily Richard's Holiday Helper. Check out metronews.ca/food for past editions.

Drink of the week

Christmas Coffee

It's the holidays. You don't have to work, so why not make your caffeine fix a little more festive?

- 1 oz Bailey's Mint Chocolate
- .25 oz Frangelico
- .25 oz Kahlua
- Hot coffee

Stir everything with freshly brewed coffee in a large, tempered glass. Top with whipped cream — homemade tastes better, but the canned stuff will look prettier — and sprinkle with shaved dark chocolate and candy cane crumble. Replace the last two liqueurs with Irish whiskey if the sun's already set. **JOE HOWELL, HEAD BARTENDER AT THE SPOKE CLUB (THESPOKECLUB.COM)**

JOE HOWELL

A delicious and classic party offering

While most people opt for a store-bought version, French Onion Dip isn't difficult to make from scratch

MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

▶ This recipe serves 16.

Always a family favourite, this herb enhanced onion dip is delicious served up with kettle chips as a classic, but try it with fresh cut veggies or use it as a new dip idea for chicken or steak or a spread for a new crostini idea.

Preparation:

1 In skillet heat olive oil over medium heat. Add onions, shallots, garlic, salt and pepper and cook for 15 to 18 minutes, stirring occasionally or until onions are browned and caramelized. If garlic begins to brown too much, add a few tablespoons of water; continue cooking.

2 Let mixture cool for 10 minutes, then transfer to a food processor and puree until smooth. Add cottage cheese, thyme and marjoram. Purée again until smooth. Stir in chopped chives.

Ingredients:

- 30 ml (2 tbsp) olive oil
- 2 large sweet onions, sliced
- 4 shallots, sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 5 ml (1 tsp) salt
- 2 ml (1/2 tsp) freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tub (500 g) low-fat cottage cheese
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) chopped fresh thyme
- 10 ml (2 tsp) chopped fresh marjoram
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) chopped fresh chives

3 Serve immediately or cover and refrigerate an hour for flavours to meld.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/ ADAPTED BY EMILY RICHARDS (PROFESSIONAL HOME ECONOMIST, COOKBOOK AUTHOR AND A TV CELEBRITY CHEF. FOR MORE, VISIT EMILYRICHARDSCOOKS.CA)

Mix learning with living it up

One student weighs in on the importance of balancing work and play while piecing through post-secondary

STUDENT VOICE

AYSHA KHALIQ
TALENTEGG.CA

I moved to Nova Scotia to attend school full-time. Cape Breton University (CBU) has an awesome business school where I didn't only study and learn, but I also enjoyed my life more than I ever had before.

There are many reasons why I call my time there the best days of my life. If I have to explain in a few lines, what I loved the most was the super friendly learning environment, highly qualified teachers with a lot of experience, the library — such a good source of research in physical and electronic forms, the sports complex with many free-of-cost facilities and last but not least my residence.

When I moved to Cape Breton, I did not know a single person there. In the beginning, I was quite concerned what my life would be like there without family and friends.

However, surprisingly, when I left the university, I knew many people from security guards, café workers, librarians to professors and students and I was filled with good memories from all of them. Now I am very blessed to have a big circle of wonderful family and friends on the other side of Canada too.

In the beginning of my last semester, I started applying for different jobs and I focused on the specific industry I was interested in.

Since I had started looking early, I had enough time to find the right place in a specific industry and find the right job.

In October 2010, I graduated with an MBA and the Valedictorian designation from Cape Breton University and a few job offers.

I believe schools should have a special program in the last two semesters of graduate studies in order to help students figure out what they want to do in the future. If students have the right plan from the start, it helps them to get into the right industry too.

In general, my advice for students would be that our university days won't come back. We should have as much fun as we can. However, at the same time opportunity won't knock on the door again and again.

We should try to balance getting good grades, building networks, and enjoying our time.

TALENTEGG.CA, CANADA'S ONLINE CAREER RESOURCE FOR STUDENTS AND RECENT GRADS, WANTS TO HEAR YOUR STUDENT VOICE. SHARE IT AT TALENTEGG.CA.

▶ Aysha Khaliq believes schools should have more programs in place to help students assess what direction they'd like to head in after graduation.

Where Aysha is now

Before my graduation, I was offered a few positions. I took my time making a decision and kept the idea of career advancement in my mind. Finally, I accepted a personal banking officer position at Scotiabank.

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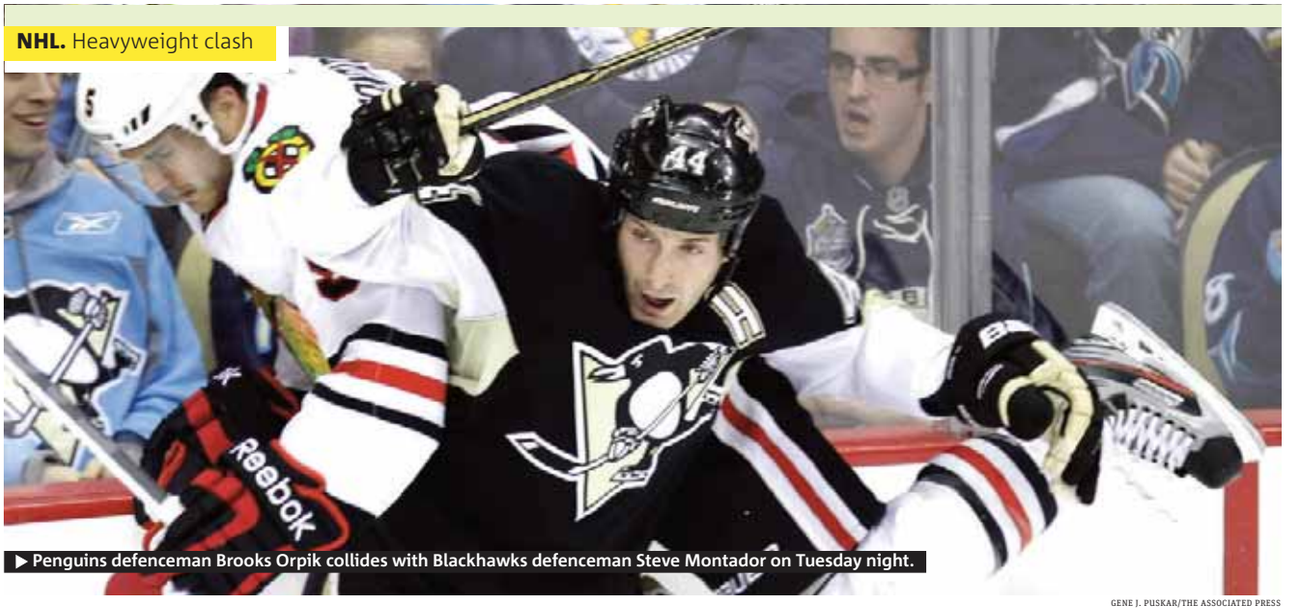
NHL. Heavyweight clash



▶ Penguins defenceman Brooks Orpik collides with Blackhawks defenceman Steve Montador on Tuesday night.

GENE J. PUSKAR/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Penguins end Blackhawks' five game win streak

Evgeni Malkin had three assists to move into a tie for the NHL scoring lead and the Pittsburgh Penguins snapped the Chicago Blackhawks' five-game winning streak with a 3-2 victory on Tuesday night.
Malkin assisted on goals by Chris Kunitz, James Neal and Tyler Kennedy, giving him points in all six games since Penguins captain Sidney Crosby left the lineup again because of concussion symptoms.
Jonathan Toews and Viktor Stalberg had third-period goals for Chicago.

Jays GM stays quiet on Yu

Anthopoulos won't even confirm if Toronto made a bid on Darvish, but sources inside baseball say team offered more than $50 million ◐ Focus is on trade market, GM says

A rare baseball buzz was built in Toronto over the last week after reports indicated the Blue Jays were a contender in the Yu Darvish sweepstakes.

Instead, the Texas Rangers secured the negotiating rights to the Japanese pitcher Monday night with a record bid worth a reported $51.7 million US. Sources in baseball insist that the Jays' bid for the 25-year-old Japanese star was over $50 million.

With the bid process generating plenty of ink, Blue Jays general manager Alex Anthopoulos held a conference call Tuesday to address a flood of interview requests.

"It's not a bottomless pit. I have what I have available and I'm going to make that work and we're going to try to put a competitive and world championship club on the field. "
GM ALEX ANTHOPOULOS ON THE JAYS' BUDGET

However, Anthopoulos had little to say and wouldn't confirm whether the Blue Jays even put in a bid.

"I try to operate close to the vest when it comes to free agency and things like that," Anthopoulos said. "And I think it's worked to our advantage in a lot of ways in our ability to make trades and so on. I think I've been consistent with what our plans have been, that our desire first and foremost is to try to explore the trade market.

"We won't rule out the free-agent market, but right now with where we're at and what we have to work with, the trade market makes more sense for us and that hasn't changed."

Anthopoulos was pressed a few times on why he wouldn't reveal whether or not the team put in a bid. The 34-year-old GM wouldn't bite, adding he feels it's important to operate quietly when it comes to front-office matters.

"I think it's one thing to say you were in on a minor-league free agent, it's another thing to say you were in on a premium, high-end free agent, that the dollars were going to be significant," he said. "Ultimately I think that's an indication to both clubs and to agents of where your payroll may be going and what you can and can't do."

THE CANADIAN PRESS WITH FILES FROM TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Sutter confirmed as Kings coach

Darryl Sutter will be the Los Angeles Kings' next head coach, general manager Dean Lombardi announced Tuesday.

Sutter will assume his duties beginning with practice Wednesday, after which the club will hold a news conference to introduce him. He takes over a Kings team that entered Tuesday three points out of a playoff spot. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Beckham reports 'premature'

David Beckham's management company says reports the former England captain has agreed a deal to join Paris Saint-Germain are "premature." **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

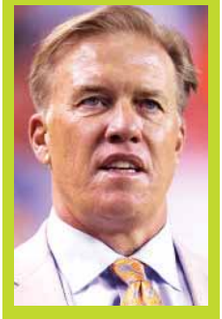
Rose, Bulls OK extension: Report

The Chicago Tribune is reporting that reigning MVP Derrick Rose has agreed to a five-year contract extension with the Chicago Bulls worth approximately $94 million US.

The Tribune cited anonymous sources in its report, which also said the new deal will start in the 2012-13 season, when Rose is eligible to make about $16 million. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

4 sports

Quoted



"Tim Tebow's not going anywhere. I mean, he's going to be a Bronco and we're going to do everything we can and hopefully he's that guy."
DENVER BRONCOS BOSS JOHN ELWAY OFFERS A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE FOR QUARTERBACK TIM TEBOW.

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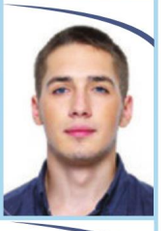

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Patriots have top seed in sight

Two wins will give New England the No. 1 spot

The New England Patriots path to the top seed in the AFC seems simple. Just win at home against two teams with losing records and they'll reach that goal.

It hardly seems like a huge challenge for the highest-scoring team in the conference rolling along with a six-game winning streak. They just have to avoid stumbling the way their three closest contenders for the No. 1 spot did in their last games.

Baltimore, Houston and Pittsburgh all lost. That left them at 10-4. New England, with a 41-23 win at the Denver Broncos last Sunday, moved to 11-3.

The Patriots could smile at their good fortune, especially with the unexpected losses by the Ravens and Texans against underdogs.

"We just need to continue to play well and win out and we'll be in a good position."
LINEBACKER ROB NINKOVICH

"I don't think we've got enough time to smile," cornerback Devin McCourty said Tuesday. "We see that happen, but I think it really (emphasizes) how important it is for us to keep playing well and to be ready to go on Saturday."

If they're not, they could get upset by the Miami Dolphins and drop back into a tie for the top seed. After facing the Dolphins, the Patriots wind up the regular season on New Year's Day against the Buffalo Bills. Both are currently 5-9.

Finishing with the top seed would give the Patriots home-field advantage throughout the AFC playoffs. But if they lose to Miami and Pittsburgh beats St. Louis on Saturday, the Steelers would edge ahead because they beat the Patriots this season.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NATIONAL HOCKEY LEAGUE

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	GP	W	L	OTL	SL	GF	GA	Pts	Home	Away	Last 10	Strk
d-Boston	32	22	9	0	1	111	63	45	12-6-0-1	10-3-0-0	8-2-0-0	W5
d-Philadelphia	32	20	8	2	2	112	94	44	8-5-1-1	12-3-1-1	7-2-0-1	L2
d-Florida	34	18	10	2	4	91	86	42	8-3-1-4	10-7-1-0	5-3-1-1	L1
NY Rangers	31	19	8	1	3	91	68	42	8-3-0-2	11-5-1-1	6-3-0-1	W2
Pittsburgh	34	19	11	2	2	110	90	42	10-4-2-0	9-7-0-2	5-5-0-0	W2
New Jersey	33	18	14	0	1	91	96	37	7-6-0-1	11-8-0-0	6-4-0-0	L1
Toronto	33	16	13	2	2	102	108	36	7-5-2-2	9-8-0-0	3-5-2-0	L3
Ottawa	34	16	14	2	2	106	117	36	9-7-0-1	7-7-2-1	4-4-1-1	W2
Washington	32	17	14	0	1	95	97	35	11-5-0-1	6-9-0-0	5-5-0-0	W1
Buffalo	33	16	14	2	1	90	98	35	8-9-2-1	8-5-0-0	3-5-2-0	L2
Winnipeg	32	15	13	3	1	89	97	34	11-5-0-0	4-8-3-1	6-4-0-0	W1
Montreal	34	13	14	2	5	87	92	33	5-7-2-4	8-7-0-1	3-4-0-3	L3
Tampa Bay	32	14	16	0	2	87	107	30	8-5-0-0	6-11-0-2	3-7-0-0	W2
NY Islanders	30	10	14	4	2	69	97	26	6-8-3-0	4-6-1-2	5-3-2-1	W1
Carolina	34	10	18	4	2	86	116	26	6-9-0-2	4-9-4-0	2-6-2-0	L1

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	GP	W	L	OTL	SL	GF	GA	Pts	Home	Away	Last 10	Strk
d-Chicago	34	21	9	1	3	113	101	46	11-2-0-3	10-7-1-0	7-2-0-1	L1
d-Minnesota	34	20	9	2	3	84	76	45	10-4-1-2	10-5-1-1	6-2-0-2	L4
d-Dallas	32	19	12	0	1	85	89	39	10-4-0-1	9-8-0-0	6-4-0-0	W1
Detroit	32	21	10	1	0	107	71	43	13-2-1-0	8-8-0-0	7-3-0-0	W2
St. Louis	32	19	9	0	4	82	69	42	13-3-0-1	6-6-0-3	7-1-0-2	W1
Vancouver	33	20	11	0	2	110	80	42	9-4-0-1	11-7-0-1	7-2-0-1	W2
Nashville	33	17	12	3	1	86	88	38	8-5-2-1	9-7-1-0	6-4-0-0	L1
San Jose	30	17	10	2	1	86	74	37	10-6-1-0	7-4-1-1	4-4-1-1	W2
Phoenix	33	17	13	1	2	86	86	37	7-7-1-1	10-6-0-1	4-6-0-0	W1
Los Angeles	33	15	14	2	2	72	81	34	8-9-0-1	7-5-2-1	4-6-0-0	W1
Colorado	34	16	17	1	0	91	102	33	10-9-0-0	6-8-1-0	6-4-0-0	W2
Calgary	33	14	15	2	2	82	94	32	8-5-1-1	6-10-1-1	4-3-1-2	L4
Edmonton	33	14	16	0	3	89	90	31	9-6-0-2	5-10-0-1	2-7-0-1	L4
Anaheim	33	9	19	2	3	78	110	23	7-9-1-0	2-10-1-3	3-6-1-0	L3
Columbus	33	9	20	1	3	80	111	22	6-10-1-1	3-10-0-2	3-6-1-0	L3

d — division leaders ranked 1-2-3 regardless of points; a team winning in overtime or shootout is credited with two points and a victory in the W column; the team losing in overtime or shootout receives one point which is registered in the OTL (overtime loss) or SL (shootout loss) column.

Last night's results
Ottawa 4 Buffalo 1
N.Y. Rangers 4 New Jersey 1
Phoenix 2 Florida 1
Pittsburgh 3 Chicago 2
Washington 4 Nashville 1
N.Y. Islanders at Winnipeg
Minnesota at Calgary
Monday's results
Boston 3 Montreal 2
Detroit 3 Edmonton 2
Los Angeles 3 Toronto 2 (SO)
Vancouver 4 Minnesota 0
Colorado 3 Philadelphia 2 (SO)
Dallas 5 Anaheim 3
Tonight's games
All Times Eastern
Phoenix at Carolina, 7 p.m.
Montreal at Chicago, 7:30 p.m.
Philadelphia at Dallas, 7:30 p.m.
St. Louis at Colorado, 9:30 p.m.
Detroit at Vancouver, 10 p.m.
Tampa Bay at San Jose, 10:30 p.m.
Tomorrow's games
N.Y. Islanders at N.Y. Rangers, 7 p.m.
Buffalo at Toronto, 7 p.m.
Florida at Ottawa, 7:30 p.m.
Columbus at Nashville, 8 p.m.
Montreal at Winnipeg, 8:30 p.m.
Detroit at Calgary, 9:30 p.m.
Minnesota at Edmonton, 9:30 p.m.
Anaheim at Los Angeles, 10 p.m.
Friday's games
Florida at Boston, 7 p.m.
Philadelphia at N.Y. Rangers, 7 p.m.
Toronto at N.Y. Islanders, 7 p.m.
Washington at New Jersey, 7 p.m.
Ottawa at Carolina, 7 p.m.
Nashville at Dallas, 8:30 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Winnipeg, 8:30 p.m.
Tampa Bay at Colorado, 9 p.m.
St. Louis at Phoenix, 9 p.m.
Calgary at Vancouver, 10 p.m.
Los Angeles at San Jose, 10:30 p.m.

SENATORS 4, SABRES 1

First Period
1. Ottawa, Smith 9 (Neil, Carkner) 11:48
Penalty — Condra Ott (interference) 13:27.
Second Period
2. Buffalo, Leopold 6 (Ehrhoff, Vanek) 13:12 (pp)
Penalties — Daugavins Ott (boarding) 3:33, Turris Ott (hooking) 7:51, Stafford Buf (slashing) 8:38, Greening Ott (hooking) 12:18, Vanek Buf (tripping) 15:52.
Third Period
3. Ottawa, Condra 5 (Turris) 7:59
4. Ottawa, Karlsson 3 (Alfredsson, Spezza) 17:49 (pp)
5. Ottawa, Condra 6 (Karlsson) 18:14 (en)
Penalty — Gaustad Buf (roughing) 16:55.
Shots

Buffalo	8	8	7	23
Ottawa	10	13	16	39

Goal — Buffalo: Miller (L,8-7-2); Ottawa: Anderson (W,14-11-2). **Power plays (goals-chances)** — Buffalo: 1-4; Ottawa: 1-3.
Referees — Brian Pochmara, Chris Rooney.
Linesmen — Michel Cormier, Tony Sericolo.
Attendance — 18,474 (19,153) at Ottawa.

LATE MONDAY

RED WINGS 3, OILERS 2

First Period
1. Detroit, Cleary 8 (Kindl) 4:33
Penalties — Ericsson Det (hooking) 13:44, White Det (tripping) 14:48.
Second Period
2. Edmonton, Jones 11 (Gagner, Belanger) 2:37
3. Detroit, Hudler 7 (Zetterberg, Filppula) 14:36
4. Edmonton, Eberle 13 (Nugent-Hopkins, Hall) 19:59 (pp)
Penalties — Miller Det (interference) 6:09, Eager Edm (interference) 8:38, Ericsson Det (interference) 19:16.
Third Period
5. Detroit, Miller 6 (Lidstrom, Helm) 15:45
Penalties — Horcoff Edm (high-sticking) 5:22, Kronwall Det (delay of game) 16:58.
Shots

Detroit	7	11	10	28
Edmonton	10	8	6	28

Goal — Detroit: Howard (W,20-7-1); Edmonton: Khabibulin (L,10-8-3). **Power plays (goals-chances)** — Detroit: 0-2; Edmonton: 1-5.
Referees — Stephen Walkom, Brad Watson.
Linesmen — Derek Nansen, Dan Schachte.
Attendance — 16,839 (16,839) at Edmonton.

CANUCKS 4, WILD 0

First Period
1. Vancouver, H. Sedin 9 (D. Sedin, Edler) 18:52 (pp)
Penalty — Gillies Min (hooking) 17:52.
Second Period
2. Vancouver, Kesler 8 (D. Sedin, H. Sedin) 10:28 (pp)
3. Vancouver, Burrows 12 (D. Sedin, H. Sedin) 18:01
Penalties — Powe Min (holding) 2:36, Kesler Vcr (tripping) 7:25, Heatley Min (high-sticking) 8:38.
Third Period
4. Vancouver, Hansen 11 (Hodgson, Malhotra) 16:34
Penalties — Staubitz Min, Alberts Vcr (fighting) 5:32.
Shots

Minnesota	13	9	11	33
Vancouver	11	11	11	33

Goal — Minnesota: Backstrom (L,11-7-4); Vancouver: Luongo (W,13-6-2).
Power plays (goals-chances) — Minnesota: 0-1; Vancouver: 2-3.
Referees — Mike Hasenfratz, Marc Joannette.
Linesmen — Mike Cvik, Vaughan Rody.
Attendance — 18,860 at Vancouver.

SCORING LEADERS

	G	A	PT
Kessel, Tor	19	20	39
Giroux, Pha	16	23	39
H.Sedin, Vcr	9	30	39
D.Sedin, Vcr	13	25	38
Stamkos, TB	20	17	37
Hossa, Chi	15	21	36
Lupul, Tor	15	21	36
Malkin, Pgh	15	21	36
Spezza, Ott	12	24	36
Toews, Chi	18	17	35
Sharp, Chi	17	18	35
Selanne, Ana	11	24	35
Pominville, Buf	10	25	35
Vanek, Buf	17	17	34
Versteeg, Fla	16	18	34
Eberle, Edm	13	21	34
Nugent-Hopkins, Edm	13	21	34
Datsyuk, Det	10	23	33
Neal, Pgh	18	14	32
Backstrom, Wash	11	21	32
Weiss, Fla	11	21	32
P.Kane, Chi	9	23	32
Franzen, Det	14	16	30
Fleischmann, Fla	12	18	30
Kopitar, LA	10	20	30
Hartnell, Pha	16	13	29
Perry, Ana	14	15	29
Seguin, Bos	14	15	29
Elias, NJ	13	16	29
Karlsson, Ott	2	27	29
Ra.Whitney, Phx	10	18	28
Benn, Dal	8	20	28
M.Koivu, Minn	8	20	28

Not including last night's games

HOCKEY

2012 WORLD JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP

All Times Eastern

EXHBITION SCHEDULE

Last night's results
At Red Deer, Alta.
U.S. vs. Russia
At Okotoks, Alta.
Czech Republic vs. Latvia
At Olds, Alta.
Sweden vs. Denmark
Monday's result
At Calgary
Canada 3 Finland 1
Tonight's games
At Calgary
Slovakia vs. Finland, 9 p.m.
At Camrose, Alta.
U.S. vs. Switzerland, 9:30 p.m.
Tomorrow's games
At Red Deer, Alta.
Canada vs. Switzerland, 9 p.m.
At Brooks, Alta.
Latvia vs. Denmark, 9 p.m.
At Lethbridge, Alta.
Russia vs. Czech Republic, 9 p.m.
Friday's games
At Edmonton
Canada vs. Sweden, 9:30 p.m.
At Three Hills, Alta.
U.S. vs. Slovakia, 9 p.m.

PRELIMINARY ROUND

Monday, Dec. 26
At Edmonton
Canada vs. Finland, 3:30 p.m.
U.S. vs. Denmark, 8 p.m.
At Calgary
Sweden vs. Latvia, 5:30 p.m.
Russia vs. Switzerland, 10 p.m.
Tuesday, Dec. 27
At Edmonton
Denmark vs. Czech Republic, 8 p.m.
At Calgary
Latvia vs. Slovakia, 10 p.m.
Wednesday, Dec. 28
At Edmonton
Finland vs. U.S., 3:30 p.m.
Czech Republic vs. **Canada**, 8 p.m.
At Calgary
Switzerland vs. Sweden, 5:30 p.m.
Slovakia vs. Russia, 10 p.m.

FOOTBALL

NCAA BOWL GLANCE

All Times Eastern
(subject to change)
Last night's result
BEEF 'O'BRADY'S BOWL
At St. Petersburg, Fla.
Marshall (6-6) vs. FIU (8-4)
Tonight's games
POINSETTIA BOWL
At San Diego
Texas Christian (10-2) vs. Louisiana Tech (8-4), 8p.m.
Tomorrow's game
MAACO BOWL
At Las Vegas
Boise State (11-1) vs. Arizona State (6-6), 8 p.m.
Saturday's game
HAWAII BOWL
At Honolulu
Nevada (7-5) vs. Southern Mississippi (11-2), 8 p.m.

SOCCER

ENGLAND

PREMIER LEAGUE

Yesterday's results
Blackburn 1 Bolton 2
Wolverhampton Wanderers 2 Norwich 2

SPAIN

COPA DEL REY

FOURTH ROUND — RETURN LEG
Yesterday's results
Real Madrid 5 Ponferradina 1
(Real Madrid advances 7-1 on aggregate)
Sporting Gijon 0, Mallorca 2
(Mallorca advances 2-1 on aggregate)
Espanyol 4 Celta Vigo 2
(Espanyol advances 4-2 on aggregate)
Sevilla 2 San Roque 1
(Sevilla advances 3-1 on aggregate)

GERMANY

GERMAN CUP

THIRD ROUND
Yesterday's results
Bochum 1 Bayern Munich 2
Nuremberg 0 Greuther Fuerth 1
Hoffenheim 2 Augsburg 1
Fortuna Duesseldorf 0 Borussia Dortmund 0
(Dortmund wins 5-4 on penalty kicks)

ITALY

SERIE A

Yesterday's results
Siena 0 Fiorentina 0
Cagliari 0 AC Milan 2

FRANCE

LIGUE 1

Yesterday's result
Nancy 1 Marseille 3

NBA

PRE-SEASON

Last night's results
Philadelphia 101 Washington 94
Detroit 90 Cleveland 89
Indiana at Chicago
Dallas at Oklahoma City
Phoenix at Denver
Golden State at Sacramento
Monday's results
Charlotte 79 Atlanta 77
Portland 110 Utah 90
L.A. Clippers 114 L.A. Lakers 95
Tonight's games
All Times Eastern
Miami at Orlando, 7 p.m.
Toronto at Boston, 7:30 p.m.
New Jersey at New York, 7:30 p.m.
Memphis at New Orleans, 8 p.m.
Minnesota at Milwaukee, 8 p.m.
Houston at San Antonio, 8:30 p.m.
Portland at Utah, 9 p.m.
L.A. Lakers at L.A. Clippers, 10:30 p.m.
Tomorrow's games
Charlotte at Atlanta, 7:30 p.m.
Denver at Phoenix, 9 p.m.

NFL

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

EAST	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
y-New England	11	3	0	.786	437	297
N.Y. Jets	8	6	0	.571	346	315
Miami	5	9	0	.357	286	269
Buffalo	5	9	0	.357	311	371
SOUTH						
y-Houston	10	4	0	.714	343	236
Tennessee	7	7	0	.500	279	278
Jacksonville	4	10	0	.286	207	293
Indianapolis	1	13	0	.071	211	395
NORTH						
x-Baltimore	10	4	0	.714	334	236
x-Pittsburgh	10	4	0	.714	285	218
Cincinnati	8	6	0	.571	305	283
Cleveland	4	10	0	.286	195	274
WEST						
Denver	8	6	0	.571	292	343
Oakland	7	7	0	.500	317	382
San Diego	7	7	0	.500	358	313
Kansas City	6	8	0	.429	192	319

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

EAST	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Dallas	8	6	0	.571	348	296
N.Y. Giants	7	7	0	.500	334	372
Philadelphia	6	8	0	.429	342	311
Washington	5	9	0	.357	252	300
SOUTH						
x-New Orleans	11	3	0	.786	457	306
Atlanta	9	5	0	.643	341	281
Carolina	5	9	0	.357	341	368
Tampa Bay	4	10	0	.286	247	401
NORTH						
y-Green Bay	13	1	0	.929	480	297
Detroit	9	5	0	.643	395	332
Chicago	7	7	0	.500	315	293
Minnesota	2	12	0	.143	294	406
WEST						
y-San Francisco	11	3	0	.786	327	185
Seattle	7	7	0	.500	284	273
Arizona	7	7	0	.500	273	305
St. Louis	2	12	0	.143	166	346

x-clinched playoff spot; **y**-clinched division
WEEK 15
Monday's result
San Francisco 20 Pittsburgh 3
WEEK 16
Tomorrow's game
All Times Eastern
Houston at Indianapolis, 8:20 p.m.
Saturday's games
Oakland at Kansas City, 1 p.m.
Jacksonville at Tennessee, 1 p.m.
St. Louis at Pittsburgh, 1 p.m.
Denver at Buffalo, 1 p.m.
Tampa Bay at Carolina, 1 p.m.
Minnesota at Washington, 1 p.m.
Cleveland at Baltimore, 1 p.m.
Miami at New England, 1 p.m.
N.Y. Giants at N.Y. Jets, 1 p.m.
Arizona at Cincinnati, 1 p.m.
San Diego at Detroit, 4:05 p.m.
San Francisco at Seattle, 4:15 p.m.
Philadelphia at Dallas, 4:15 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 25
Chicago at Green Bay, 8:20 p.m.
Monday, Dec. 26
Atlanta at New Orleans, 8:30 p.m.

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∞∞EXCEPT CIVIC HYBRID

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OR

PURCHASE FOR $198 @0.9% APR BI-WEEKLY FINANCE FOR 60 MONTHS**

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$2,856 DOWN PAYMENT/OAC

^SELLING PRICE INCLUDES FREIGHT, PDI, LEVIES AND OMVIC FEE. EXCLUDES LICENSE AND HST.

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*Includes Freight, PDI, Levies, and OMVIC fee. Excludes License and HST. *Limited time lease offers on a new 2012 Honda Civic LX Sedan with Manual Transmission (Model FB2E4CEX) // 2011 Honda CR-V LX 2WD (Model RE3H3BEY) available through Honda Financial Services Inc., on approved credit. Representative lease example: based on a 2012 Honda Civic LX Sedan with Manual Transmission (Model FB2E4CEX) // 2011 Honda CR-V LX 2WD (Model RE3H3BEY) on a 48 // 48 month term at 1.99% // 0.9% lease APR, the monthly payment is $177.98 // $297.95 [includes $1,395 // $1,590 freight and PDI, EHF tires ($29), EHF filters ($1), A/C tax ($100), and OMVIC fee ($5)] with $2,240 // $2,550 down payment or equivalent trade-in, $0 // $0 security deposit and first monthly payment due at lease inception. Total lease obligation is $8,543.04 // $14,301.60. 96,000-kilometre allowance; charge of $0.12/km for excess kilometres. **Receive 1.99% // 0.9% purchase financing on a new 2012 Honda Civic LX Sedan with Manual Transmission (Model FB2E4CEX) // 2011 Honda CR-V LX 2WD (Model RE3H3BEY) for a maximum of 60 // 60 months available through Honda Financial Services Inc., on approved credit. Bi-weekly Finance example: based on a 2012 Honda Civic LX Sedan with Manual Transmission (Model FB2E4CEX) // 2011 Honda CR-V LX 2WD (Model RE3H3BEY) on a 60 // 60 month term at 1.99% // 0.9% APR, 130 bi-weekly payments of $153.83 // $197.99, and complete price of $19,020 // $28,015 [includes $1,395 // $1,590 freight and PDI, EHF tires ($29), EHF filters ($1), A/C tax ($100), and OMVIC fee ($5). Excludes other taxes, license and insurance]. $0 // $2,856 down payment or equivalent trade-in based on approved credit from Honda Financial Services Inc. Cost of borrowing is $977.40 // $579.80 for a total finance obligation of $19,997.40 // $28,594.80. †Limited time lease offer on any new 2012 Honda Civic Sedan or Civic Coupe (except Civic Hybrid), through Honda Financial Services Inc., on approved credit. Representative lease example: 2012 Honda Civic LX Sedan with Manual Transmission (Model FB2E4CEX) on a 24 month term at 0.99% lease APR, the monthly payment is $309.58 [includes $1,395 freight and PDI, EHF tires ($29), EHF filters ($1), A/C tax ($100), and OMVIC fee ($5)] with $0 down payment or equivalent trade-in, $0 security deposit and first monthly payment due at lease inception. Total lease obligation is $7,429.92. 48,000-kilometre allowance; charge of $0.12/km for excess kilometres. ‡Receive 0.99% purchase financing on any new 2012 Honda Civic Sedan or Civic Coupe (except Civic Hybrid) for a maximum of 24 months available through Honda Financial Services Inc., on approved credit. Example: based on a 2012 Honda Civic LX Sedan with Manual Transmission (Model FB2E4CEX) on a 24 month term at 0.99% APR and complete price of $19,020 [includes $1,395 freight and PDI, EHF tires ($29), EHF filters ($1), A/C tax ($100), and OMVIC fee ($5). Excludes other taxes, license, and insurance], the monthly payment is $800.70. Cost of borrowing is $196.80 for a total finance obligation of $19,216.80. Down payment or equivalent trade-in on purchase financing offers may be required based on approved credit from Honda Financial Services Inc. §$1,000 Holiday Bonus offer applies only to retail customer purchase, lease or finance agreements for new 2012 Honda Civic Sedan and Coupe models (except Civic Hybrid) concluded between December 1, 2011 and December 31, 2011 at participating Ontario Honda Dealers. $1,000 Holiday Bonus is deducted after taxes. For all offers: license, insurance, PPSA, and other taxes (including HST and tax for fuel conservation, if applicable) are extra. Taxes payable on full amount of purchase price. Offers only valid for Ontario residents at Ontario Honda Dealers. Dealer may sell/lease for less. Dealer order/trade may be necessary. Vehicles and accessories are for illustration purposes only. Offers subject to change without notice. See your Ontario Honda Dealer or visit HondaOntario.com for full details.

SCAN HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION

Cargo

The interior has been given the update treatment, providing a slightly enlarged passenger area but at the expense of slightly reduced cargo volume.

This time, though, maximizing the load floor is a snap with the new fold-down rear seat that operates by flipping a pair of levers located just inside the tailgate.

Fuel consumption

Fuel consumption has improved to 9.0 l/100 km city and 6.4 highway for front-wheel-drive models (formerly 10.5/7.3). All-wheel-drive models are rated at 9.2 l/100 km city and 6.6 highway (previously 10.1/7.5).

The improvements are attributed to a new anti-friction coating for the pistons, a faster-activating on-demand AWD system as well as a revised five-speed automatic transmission.

Engine, steering

Getting CR-V owners to work, the gym, or the daycare is a revised 2.4-litre four-cylinder engine that makes 185 horsepower and 163 pound-feet of torque, which is slightly more than the previous 2.4.

From observation, Honda engineers have largely succeeded at smoothing out the CR-V's ride and creating a quieter interior. On the down side, the newly installed "Motion-Adaptive" electric power-assisted steering (called EPAS) feels a bit numb, especially when driving straight down the highway.

▶ Subtle changes are sometimes the best: reorganizing a few lines at the back creates this dramatic profile.

Resculpted not recreated

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WHEELBASE MEDIA

Calling all cool moms; your new fourth-generation Honda CR-V chariot awaits.

Of course Honda's popular tall wagon isn't just for active women with toddlers in tow, but according to the automaker, the "cool moms" segment makes up, or significantly influences, the largest portion of CR-V buyers. They, along with others seeking a roomy ride with all-weather, all-road capability, will appreciate the vehicle's car-like behaviour and economical operation.

CR-V devotees will not easily spot the latest version of Honda's compact "cute ute" since it closely mirrors the outgoing version in all key exterior dimensions. What's more, the general shape remains only moderately tinkered-with, including updated nose and tail section plus a more dramatically shaped rear roof pillar that introduces a bit more drama to the vehicle's styling. Honda claims that the new CR-V's shape, along with modifications to the undercarriage to increase air flow, has reduced fuel-robbing aerodynamic drag by eight per cent.

Honda seems content with not rocking the boat with its latest CR-V, perhaps sensing that the time isn't quite right to introduce a totally clean-sheet design. The cool-mom crowd would likely agree.

▶ The opening is wide and the load floor is deeper and extends 1.5 metres forward, but you'll have to wiggle, shimmy and wedge items around the bulbous trim panels for the wheel housings.

▶ The green button to the left of the steering wheel is "ECON," which optimizes the transmission and air conditioning for maximum fuel economy, providing you're driving in a thrifty manner.

Honda CR-V

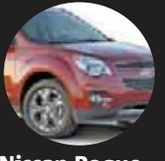
What you should know about the 2012 Honda CR-V:

- **Types:** Four-door, front- /all-wheel-drive five-passenger tall wagon.
- **Engine (hp):** 2.4-litre DOHC I4 (185).
- **Transmission:** Five-speed automatic.
- **Market position:** Modestly sized wagons, including the segment-dominant CR-V, are hot sellers and provide less costly and more fuel-efficient alternatives to traditional truck-based sport utes.
- **Mileage:** L/100 km (city/hwy) 9.0/6.4 (FWD).

5 drive

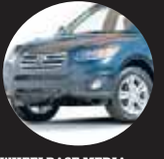
By comparison

Chevrolet Equinox
Base price: $27,800
Stylish, roomy wagon specializes in a quiet ride and impressive fuel numbers.



Nissan Rogue
Base price: $25,400
Looks like a smaller version of Nissan's Murano, which is a bonus.

Hyundai Santa Fe
Base price: $25,800
Conservative looks, but a solidly built standout with optional V-6 power.



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CAR JOURNEYS PART OF THE HOLIDAY EXPERIENCE

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ISTOCK

▶ Chances are your vehicle will be involved in some sort of memory you create during the holidays.

It's perfectly fine that the vehicle's main role during the holidays is helping us get to where we want to be, like with our families, or extremely far away from our families where there is also a good beach.

We don't need to start stringing lights on every Ford Taurus, or going with eggnog-flavoured 5W30 engine oil over the holidays.

That would be forcing it if you ask me — like attaching fake antlers to a cat.

Like everybody, my most vivid memories of driving to a family Christmas event occurred when I was a kid, when Christmas was feverishly crucial.

Unfortunately the drives that stick out the most were the long ones to my uncle's farm up north.

Back then I routinely got car sick, so I remember a few times standing beside the car in the snow on some back road, in full puke mode. Hey, not every memory has to be a stupendously good one. The important thing is that they're memorable enough to lodge in your memory for the long haul.

Christmas Eve 17 years ago, when our daughter was just a year old, we stayed overnight at my mother's home, the ancestral bungalow in the suburbs. As usual, the kid refused to go to sleep at the appointed time — a habit she manages to maintain to this day. When she was still screaming well past midnight, I did what all fathers do under such circumstances — buckled her into the car seat, and drove around aimlessly until she fell asleep.

Not every memory has to be a stupendously good one. The important thing is that they're memorable enough to lodge in your memory for the long haul.

Driving around my old hometown, in the dead quiet of Christmas night, decorations and lights everywhere, daughter in the back slowly falling asleep, well … it wasn't the worst half hour I ever spent behind the wheel.

These days we have to make a relatively short run on Christmas Eve, about an hour door to door.

Simple, right? And with no chance of vomit?

Well, thankfully nausea is no longer in the picture, but things are far from simple. Trying not to forget and pack every present, trying to leave on time with four people with four different agendas, and trying to properly secure a broccoli casserole and Greek salad somewhere in the cargo area, is exhaustive and tricky stuff.

But that's precisely why there is such euphoria when we're finally on our way. Nothing left to do but enjoy the ride, hope there is no Feta cheese disaster in the trunk, and look forward to the festivities that will soon unfold.

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58* Miles Per Gallon

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YOUR NEW CAR DEALER: HELPING YOU GO FURTHER

THE WHEEL DEAL

TODD BOURGON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, TORONTO AUTOMOBILE DEALERS ASSOCIATION
TADA@METRONEWS.CA

The holidays can be an expensive time of year. Purchasing gifts and celebrating with friends and family can become a costly proposition whether you are hosting or travelling abroad.

Many new car dealers across the GTA are doing their part to ease the financial burdens of the season by helping your money go further.

Participating members of the Toronto Automobile Dealers Association are now offering Aeroplan Miles on a variety of purchases. Some restrictions may apply — you can find a participating dealer through tada.ca.

The Futura Loyalty Group has partnered with Aeroplan in the automotive category, and introduced the opportunity to Toronto-area new car dealers so that they can offer Aeroplan Miles.

Many new car dealerships across Ontario are joining this program each and every day to offer customers Aeroplan Miles on a full list of services, parts, wheels, tires, collision repair, and new vehicle purchases or leases.

Not only that, but for a limited time, customers who make a qualifying purchase from their participating local new car dealer will have a chance to win one of four prizes of 25,000 Aeroplan Miles in the Drive Off with Aeroplan Miles contest.

Check your local dealership as offers may vary. You may be going farther than you thought this holiday season.

"The benefit for consumers is significant because next to a home, a vehicle is one of the largest investments to purchase and maintain," says Graham Farrell, chief marketing officer for The Futura Loyalty Group.

Aeroplan is one of the most recognized brands in Canada and allows customers to earn miles on the spot and have them deposited directly into their Aeroplan Account.

Aeroplan is Canada's premier coalition loyalty program.

In addition to flights, members also have access to over 800 exciting specialty, merchandise, hotel, car rental and experiential rewards.

For more information please visit tada.ca or aeroplan.ca.

I wish you a healthy, happy and safe holiday season and a happy New Year.

*Toyota Financial Services will match the customer's down payment and/or trade equity on 2011 tC/xB/xD models up to $1500/$2000/$2000, when customer leases through TFS, on approved credit. TFS matched contribution will be applied as a non-cash credit to the amount being leased. The customer must provide their own down payment and/or trade equity. Offers valid on retail delivery of new unregistered qualifying models when leased, registered and delivered between December 1, 2011 and January 2, 2012. Limited time lease offer provided through Toyota Financial Services on approved credit, based on a new unregistered 2011 Scion tC/xB/xD when retail leased, registered and delivered between Dec 1, 2011 and Jan 2, 2012. 1.9 % lease APR for 48 months. Monthly payment is $234/172/169 with $3000/4000/4000 down payment or equivalent trade-in, $1,390 freight and PDI, $0 security deposit and first monthly payment due at lease inception. Total lease obligation is $14245/ 12270/12130. 20,000 kilometre allowance; charge of $0.07/km for excess kilometres. Monthly payment examples based on manual transmission. Taxes, license, insurance, registration and applicable duties/fees are extra. Dealer may lease for less. Offer is subject to change without notice. See your participating Scion Dealer for details. Vehicles shown with optional accessories. MSRPs do not include freight and PDI ($1,390), license, insurance, registration, applicable taxes, levies and fees. Dealer may sell for less.

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DODGE CARAVAN KIDS

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38 MPG HWY
7.5L/100 KM HWY"

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2012 DODGE JOURNEY CANADA VALUE PACKAGE

CANADA'S #1 SELLING CROSSOVER^

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PURCHASE PRICE INCLUDES $2,000 CONSUMER CASH,• FREIGHT, AIR TAX, TIRE LEVY AND OMVIC FEE. TAXES EXCLUDED. OTHER RETAILER CHARGES MAY APPLY.•

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STEP UP TO THE 2012 DODGE JOURNEY SXT

- 3.6L Pentastar™ VVT V6 with 283 HP
- One-touch up/down front windows (driver & passenger)
- Overhead console
- Dual bright exhaust tips
- Highway: 7.8L/100 KM (36 MPG)¤

$26 MORE BI-WEEKLY

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BEST NEW SUV/CUV UNDER $35,000 IN 2012 ACCORDING TO AJAC.

STEP UP AND GET $500 HOLIDAY BONUS CASH:

+Your local retailer may charge additional fees for administration/pre-delivery that can range from $0 to $1,098 and anti-theft/safety products that can range from $0 to $1,298. Charges may vary by retailer.

Dodge.ca/Offers

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MORE POWER. LESS FUEL. GREAT VALUE.

15 VEHICLES WITH 35 MPG HWY OR BETTER

CHRYSLER Jeep DODGE RAM

More Power. Less Fuel. Great Value is a comparison between the entire current Chrysler Canada lineup and the entire 2011 Chrysler Canada lineup. Wise customers read the fine print: • ' ◆ ‖ ∞ § The Stuffed With Savings Event offers are limited time offers which apply to retail deliveries of selected new and unused models purchased from participating retailers between December 1 and December 22, 2011. Retailer order/trade may be necessary. Offers subject to change and may be extended without notice. See participating retailers for complete details and conditions. •$19,995 Purchase Price applies to 2012 Dodge Journey Canada Value Package (22P) only and includes $2,000 Consumer Cash Discount. See participating retailers for complete details. Pricing includes freight ($1,400), air tax (if applicable), tire levy and OMVIC fee. Pricing excludes licence, insurance, registration, any retailer administration fees, other retailer charges and other applicable fees and taxes. Retailer order/trade may be necessary. Retailer may sell for less. '2012 Dodge Journey Canada Value Package (22P) with a Purchase Price of $19,995, includes applicable Consumer Cash Discount, financed at 4.99% over 96 months with $0 down payment, details 208 bi-weekly payments of $117 with cost of borrowing of $4,297 and a total obligation of $24,291.83. Purchase price includes freight ($1,400), air tax (if applicable), tire levy and OMVIC fee. Pricing excludes licence, insurance, registration, any retailer administration fees, other retailer charges and other applicable fees and taxes. Retailer order/trade may be necessary. Retailer may sell for less. ◆The $500 Holiday Bonus Cash offer includes applicable taxes and is available on the retail purchase/lease of the following eligible vehicles between December 1, 2011 and January 3, 2012 at participating retailers: any new 2011/2012 Chrysler, Jeep, Dodge, Ram or FIAT model excluding only the following: Chrysler 200 LX, Dodge Journey Canada Value Package/SE Plus (22F & 22G), Grand Caravan Canada Value Package, Grand Caravan Cargo Van (C/V), Avenger SE/Canada Value Package, Caliber SE, Jeep Grand Cherokee SRT8, Wrangler Sport, Compass Sport 4x2 & 4x4 (base 240, 250, 260 & 261), Patriot Sport 4x2 & 4x4 (base 240, 250, 260, 280 & 281), Ram Cargo Van (C/V), 1500 Reg Cab 4x2 & 4x4, and Cab & Chassis 4x2 & 4x4 models. $500 Bonus Cash will be deducted from the negotiated purchase price after taxes or may be used, at customer's option, to reduce their first monthly payment or towards the purchase of Mopar accessories or service packages. Some conditions apply. See participating retailers for complete details. ∞Offer valid from November 28, 2011 to December 22, 2011 (the "Promotional Period"). Limited to one (1) Grand Prize available to be won, consisting of a cheque for the total purchase price of the new Chrysler, Jeep, Dodge or Ram vehicle purchased, plus $10,000. A random draw will be held on January 9, 2012 in Oakville, ON. Must be a resident of Ontario and be the age of majority. Odds of winning depend on the total number of eligible entries received. Correct answer to a mathematical skill-testing question required. Limited to one entry per person. For complete contest rules, including no purchase means of entry, go to: https://forms.chryslercanada.ca/Ontarioontest. §2012 Dodge Journey SXT shown. Price including applicable Consumer Cash Discount and Holiday Bonus Cash: $26,530. Pricing includes freight ($1,400), air tax (if applicable), tire levy and OMVIC fee. Pricing excludes licence, insurance, registration, any retailer administration fees, other retailer charges and other applicable fees and taxes. See bottom of the ad for range of potential retailer fees. Retailer order/trade may be necessary. Retailer may sell for less. ^Based on January 2010 through August 2011 R.L. Polk sales total registrations. ¤Based on 2012 EnerGuide Fuel Consumption Guide ratings published by Natural Resources Canada. Transport Canada test methods used. Your actual fuel consumption may vary. 2012 Dodge Journey Canada Value Package & SE Plus – Hwy: 7.5L/100 km and City: 10.8L/100 km. 2012 Dodge Journey SXT – Hwy: 7.8L/100 km and City: 12.6L/100 km. "SIRIUS and the dog logo are registered trademarks of SIRIUS Satellite Radio Inc. "Jeep is a registered trademark of Chrysler Group LLC.

E MELNYCHUK
FOR WHEELBASE MEDIA

Christmas gift Ideas

So you haven't started your Christmas shopping yet, but you still want to be inventive and original with your gifts Well, if you've got an auto-lover on your list, this is a good start

ALL PHOTOS WHEELBASE MEDIA

A phone gasket?
There are all sorts of protective cases available for the Apple iPhone 4, but one of the coolest for automotive fanatics has to be the Gasket case from id America. The product, which was inspired by an automobile cylinder-head gasket, fits over the back of the phone. It's made of lightweight brushed aluminum and comes with a non-scratch suede inner liner for added protection. About $30, idcase.com.

A graphic display
Sculptor Sal Erato's three-dimensional images are made using fibreglass resin forms attached to a solid wood background and brush painted to suit the purchaser. His subjects include a number of famous racing and street cars, including Corvettes, Cobras, Ferraris, Porsches and so on. Prices generally range in the $1,100-$2,500. salerato.com.

Hamilton's brain bucket
The McLaren Formula One racing team's gift shop will sell you a half-scale replica of driver Lewis Hamilton's helmet for just $100. The real thing is $30,000. The small version is made of fibreglass and is correct right down to the tilting visor, inside foam padding and logos. There's a similar helmet done up in Jensen Button's colours. mclarenshop.com.

Ford WHITEOAK FORD LINCOLN LINCOLN

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ONLY 1 IN STOCK!
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-$1000 COSTCO MEMBERS (Taxable Rebate)
$29,406+HST

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ALLOY WHEELS, POWER GROUP, FRONT AND SIDE AIRBAGS, ABS, AUTOMATIC, CD PLAYER AND MORE!
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-$1000 RECYCLE YOUR RIDE (Taxable Rebate)
-$750 WINTER SAFETY PACKAGE (Cash Alternative)
$21,354+HST

2012 FUSION SE SYNC
SYNC, ABS, FRONT & SIDE AIRBAGS, 60/40 SPLIT, FOLD REAR SEAT, ALUM. WHEELS, POWER GROUP AND THE LIST GOES ON!
$22,999+HST
-$1000 COSTCO MEMBERS (Taxable Rebate)
-$1000 RECYCLE YOUR RIDE (Taxable Rebate)
-$750 WINTER SAFETY PACKAGE (Cash Alternative)
$20,565+HST

2011 F350 CREW CAB 4X4
SECURITY GROUP, SNOW PLOW PACKAGE, TRAILER BRAKE CONTROLLER WITH 12.5K HITCH, UPFITTER SWITCHES, 40/20/40 CLOTH SEATS AND THE LIST GOES ON!
$44,999+HST
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-$3000 RECYCLE YOUR RIDE (Taxable Rebate)
$41,459+HST

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DECOR PACKAGE, SLIDING REAR WINDOW, SNOW PLOW PACKAGE, TRAILER BRAKE CONTROLLER WITH 12.5K HITCH, 40/20/40 SPLIT CLOTH SEAT AND MORE!
$37,999+HST
-$3000
-$1000
$34,459+HST

2011 F150 4X4 5.0L V8
SUPERCAB, 4X4, POWER GROUP AND THE LIST GOES ON!
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-$1000
-$2500
$26,382+HST

2012 TAURUS SEL
NOT A BASE CAR! SYNC, REVERSE SENSING, POWER GROUP, ALLOYS, CRUISE AND THE LIST GOES ON!
$31,999+HST
-$1000
-$1000
$30,229+HST

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Buy backs are $15,249.9 for the MKZ / $18,603.60 for the MKX. Example: $10,000 financed at 0% is $166 per month for 60 months, $208 per mo. for 48mo, $277 per mo. for 36mo and total interest is $0. 20,000 km per year allowance, with a 16 cent per kilometer charge over 20,000. COSTCO rebate is taxable and available on all new 2011 and 2012 Lincolns. Cash prices/leases and 0% finance up to 60mo. are: MKZ $37,447 / MKX $46,651. Total cost of borrowing on finance or lease is $0.00 *Recycle Your Ride Rebates are available on 2005 MY or Older and must provide proof of Ownership for minimum 3 months to Qualify. $750 Credit in lieu of Winter Safety Package. **2012 Escape XLT is $23,399 financed at 0%, 390 per mo. x 60mo, total interest charges $0.00. Prices only valid on date of publication.

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▶ See, Santa knows what's up. He did his Christmas shopping early.

Leather down there
Inpelle Auto Accessories makes seat coverings for BMW, Porsche and Audi and also offers custom-fitted floor mats for a variety of makes. The leather is claimed to have a special weatherproof finish that resists all sorts of dirt and grime. They also install just like original-equipment mats so they won't slip. There are four colours and two different styles to choose from at about $240 from inpelleautoaccessories.com.

For ring nuts
This isn't just any nut, but a genuine piece of polished titanium jewelry that arrives custom-sized to fit your specific finger. The lug ring comes with a special "spinning-top" display stand.
The price is $185 for the satin-finished version and $195 for polished. Try one on for size at bustedknucklegarage.com.

The right racing formula
The Ferrari Virtual Academy uses the original Computer Aided Design (CAD) engineering schematics for the 2010 season's Formula One race car. The downloadable software features three different race courses. Go all out at each venue then post your time to see how well you perform against the rest of the world. Just 14.90 euro, or about $21.50 US, ferrarivirtualacademy.com.

Talk to the wheel
Charge up the Steering Wheel Bluetooth Speakerphone and get up to five hours of hands-free talk time with your Bluetooth-capable phone. There's a volume control and the user can recall up to 10 recently dialed numbers. The built-in phone book can also store up to 600 numbers. The twin speakers feature both noise reduction and echo cancellation. About $100, hammacher.com and amazon.com.

† 0% purchase financing offered on approved credit by Ally Credit for 48 months on new or demonstrator 2011 Chevrolet / GMC / Buick Aveo, Cruze, Equinox and 2012 Malibu; 72 months on Malibu; 60 months on Impala; and 36 months on 2012 Chevrolet Equinox. Rates from other lenders will vary. Down payment, trade and/or security deposit may be required. Monthly payment and cost of borrowing will vary depending on amount borrowed and down payment/trade. Example: $25,000 at 0% APR, the monthly payment is $520.83 for 48 months. Cost of borrowing is $0, total obligation is $25,000. Offer is unconditionally interest-free. Freight ($1,450) and air tax ($100, if applicable) included. License, insurance, registration, PPSA, applicable taxes and fees not included. Dealers are free to set individual prices. Offers apply to qualified retail customers only. Limited time offer which may not be combined with certain other offers. GMCL may modify, extend or terminate offers in whole or in part at any time without notice. Conditions and limitations apply. See dealer for details. 0% purchase financing offered on approved credit by TD Financing Services for 60 months on new or demonstrator 2011 Chevrolet Impala; and 48 months on 2011 Chevrolet Traverse, 2011 GMC Acadia and 2011 Buick Enclave. Rates from other lenders will vary. Down payment, trade and/or security deposit may be required. Monthly payment and cost of borrowing will vary depending on amount borrowed and down payment/trade. Example: $25,000 at 0% APR, the monthly payment is $520.83 for 48 months. Cost of borrowing is $0, total obligation is $25,000. Offer is unconditionally interest-free. Freight ($1,450) and air tax ($100, if applicable) included. License, insurance, registration, PPSA, applicable taxes and fees not included. Dealers are free to set individual prices. Offers apply to qualified retail customers only. Limited time offer which may not be combined with certain other offers. GMCL may modify, extend or terminate offers in whole or in part at any time without notice. Conditions and limitations apply. See dealer for details. ††No purchase necessary. Contest open to Canadian residents with a valid driver's license who have reached the age of majority in their province of residence. Contest runs from November 1, 2011 to January 16, 2012. Credit Awards include applicable taxes and can only be applied to the purchase or lease of a new 2011 or 2012 MY GM vehicle delivered from dealer stock, excluding Chevrolet Volt, on or before January 16, 2012. 20 Vehicle Awards consist of either a 2012 GMC Terrain SLE2 FWD + 18" Machined Aluminum Wheels, Chrome Appearance Package and Rear Cargo Security Cover or a 2012 Chevrolet Equinox 2LT FWD + 18" Machined Aluminum Wheels. Factory order may be required for Vehicle Awards. Approximate retail value of each Vehicle Award is Equinox/Terrain $30,248 MSRP/$29,818 MSRP CDN, including freight. Not all awards have the same odds of winning. Correct answer to skill testing question required to claim an award. Some examples of odds are: to receive a $1,000 base award, 1 in 1; to receive a total award of $1,200, 1 in 30; to receive a total award of $10,000, 1 in 10,000; to receive a Vehicle Award, 1 in 20,000 (total awards and vehicle awards include the $1,000 base award). See your GM dealer, visit gm.ca or call 1-800-GM-DRIVE for full contest rules. *$9,250 manufacturer to dealer delivery credit available on 2011 MY Chevrolet Silverado and GMC Sierra Light Duty CK Crew, Hybrid and Extended Cabs only (tax exclusive) for retail customers only. Other cash credits available on most models. See your GM dealer for details.

SOMETIMES YOU JUST HAVE

Look all you like, these rides are off the lots for the 2012 model year

MALCOLM GUNN
DRIVE@METRONEWS.CA
WHEELBASE MEDIA

Amidst the hoopla surrounding the kickoff to the 2012 model year, we pause to remember those vehicles for which the ride has ended. Some will be sadly missed, while others expire unloved and unwanted. Here are some of the more significant departures.

Buick Lucerne
Buick's big cruiser lasted six model years and was the flag bearer for a legion of mostly geriatric owners who loved the sensible styling, creamy ride and full-load accoutrements.

The front-wheel-drive Lucerne received the ultimate compliment when General Motors shoehorned 292 horses worth of Cadillac V-8 between its front fenders as an upgrade to the base V-6. Changing times and a diminishing customer base spelled the end for this land yacht.

Cadillac STS and DTS
In one well-aimed shot Cadillac scored a direct hit on two of its well-aged sedans, sinking them both.

The STS deserved a better fate — and a styling refresh — while the frumpy DTS was well past its expiration date. With Cadillac's designers focused on maintaining the CTS coupe, sedan and wagon family and its CTS-V performance variants, the writing was on the garage wall for the STS/DTS duo.

Chevrolet Aveo
General Motors is proudly celebrating the 100th anniversary of the division that Louis Chevrolet helped build, but the Aveo's role in the brand's success probably won't garner much notice.

The sub-compact sedan and hatchback (imported from Korea by GM's Daewoo subsidiary) never received much respect throughout its eight-year lifespan. However, the Aveo transported many a student to school and, as a second car, was the grocery cart for many a household.

It wasn't terribly fancy, but it did what it was built to do inexpensively and without complaint.

Chevrolet HHR
The acronym means Heritage High Roof, but the vehicle was all about trying to replicate the success of the Chrysler PT Cruiser.

Unfortunately, few people could recall what the original early 1950s Chevy panel van it was based on actually looked like, but they were attracted to the HHR's unusual looks and useful cargo area. Never a huge seller, the compact van fades out at the end of the 2011 model year.

▶ Dodge Nitro

Dodge Nitro
The original Jeep Liberty-based concept was outtasight gorgeous, but the attitude-adjusted result was disappointing.

The Nitro cried out for a more spirited powertrain (something bolder than the Liberty's anemic 210-horsepower V-6), some really big concept-car-type wheels and a higher-grade interior. Cost and corner cutting, not enough attention to detail and no big honking V-8 under the hood caused the Nitro to explode at the end of the 2011 model year.

Honda Element
The Element was fun, funky and crazy practical. The interior was big enough to tote plenty of bulky stuff.

▲Ratings of "Good" are the highest rating awarded for 40-mph frontal offset, 31-mph side-impact and 20-mph rear-impact crash tests conducted by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) (www.iihs.org). A "Good" rating obtained in all three crash tests plus a "Good" rating in new roof strength testing and the availability of Electronic Stability Control (ESC) (Vehicle Dynamics Control) achieves a 2011 Top Safety Pick. *Based on ALG's 2011 Residual Value Award for Best Mainstream Brand. †When you purchase, lease or finance a new 2012/2011 Forester, you will receive a $500 holiday bonus which can be applied towards options, accessories, down payment or monthly payments on an eligible 2012/2011 Forester at the time of purchase, lease or finance. Credits are inclusive of applicable taxes and will be applied, as applicable, to relevant monthly lease or finance payment or purchase price at dealership. Offer applies to vehicles delivered on or before January 4, 2012. All current stackable consumer cash incentives have been applied to the lease offers, dealer contribution may be required. *MSRP of $25,995 on 2012 Forester 2.5X (CJ1 XJ). Lease for $298 a month for 24 months with $2,495 down. 2.9% lease rate. $3,158.34 due at signing. Option to purchase at end of lease is $18,795. Advertised pricing consists of MSRP plus charges for Freight/PDI ($1,595), Air Tax ($100), Tire Stewardship Levy ($29.20), OMVIC Fee ($5), Dealer Admin ($199). Freight/PDI charge includes a full tank of gas. Taxes, licence, registration and insurance are extra. $0 security deposit. Model shown: 2011 Forester 2.5X Convenience Package (BJ2 CP). MSRP of $28,095. Dealers may sell or lease for less or may have to order or trade. Offers applicable on approved credit at participating dealers only. Lease based on a maximum of 24,000 km per year, with excess charged at $0.10/km. Leasing and financing programs available through Subaru Financial Services by TCCI. Other lease and finance rates and terms available; down payment or equivalent trade-in may be required. Vehicle shown solely for purposes of illustration, and may not be equipped exactly as shown. Offers available until January 4, 2012. See your local Subaru dealer for complete program details.

TO SAY GOODBYE

You could actually use a garden hose to clean out its water-resistant interior (wonder if anyone actually did that!). The tall roofline made its passengers appear undersized, but that was part of the Element's bread truck charm. And available all-wheel-drive turned it into the ideal ski-bum wagon. We hope Honda's skunk works is readying something equally bizzaro as a replacement.

Dodge Dakota and Ford Ranger

These inexpensive small pickups served the needs of numerous truck owners who didn't require a full-size hauler.

The compact Ford Ranger is perhaps the best known of the bunch, having faithfully served its owners for nearly three decades.

On the other hand, the somewhat larger Dakota was a viable alternative to its stouter Ram siblings. Both Ranger and Dakota were neglected by their respective companies of late and have now departed.

Volvo S40/V50

Volvo's plan of moving to a more upscale perch likely leaves little room for its entry-level sedan and wagon. That's a shame since every brand needs at least one or two models within the average Joe or Jane's budget, even if that budget is stretched to the max.

For now the cucumber-cool C30 hatchback remains, but rumours of its demise are already circulating.

Saab

As of this writing, it's unsure whether Saab's three-model lineup that remains on life support will be around much longer.

Prior to being absorbed by Dutch-based supercar builder Spyker, the once-proud Swede was owned by General Motors, which dialed out much of the quirkiness that made the brand popular. Bailout funds from China are reportedly in the works, but the outlook for Saab's eventual recovery appears bleak.

▶ Honda Element

▶ Ford Ranger

▶ Saab 9-3

Hyundai XG delivered affordable luxury

SECOND GEAR

JUSTIN PRITCHARD
DRIVE@METRONEWS.CA

Like the Azera and Genesis that came after it, the Hyundai XG350 aimed to give shoppers a cut-price taste of the automotive high-life.

Sure, it's a cheap Korean knock-off luxury car, but in a good way.

Hyundai created a luxurious atmosphere, installed plenty of hardware and priced the entire thing for the relative masses.

Engine

Look for a 3.5-litre V-6 engine, automatic transmission and front-wheel drive in all models — other than the 2001.

For that year, the car was called the XG300, due to its smaller 3-litre, 190-horsepower V-6.

What owners like

Owners like the XG's ride, interior styling, comfort levels and generous equipment list. Few reported issues with interior roominess or trunk space. Styling was also typically rated highly.

What owners dislike

Common complaints include road noise, a dim instrument panel and sub-par audio components.

Fuel mileage is also rated somewhat poorly.

Common issues

Several owners report niggling electronic and sensor-related issues, so ensure all accessories function as expected and look for any "Check Engine" or "Airbag/SRS" lights in the instrument cluster.

Note the engine's performance, particularly when accelerating from a stop. Some owners report inconsistent responses from the throttle, ranging from "lurching" off the line to a lack of power. This may be accompanied by trouble codes or a check-engine light.

Verdict

The main draw to the XG350 as a used car should be its price. Have the vehicle inspected by a Hyundai mechanic and spend a bit of the cost savings on the extended warranty, if available.

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60 Months Ammortized over 84 Months @ 1.49%
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The bad roads make good cars at auto test facilities

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Before any new vehicle design makes it to market, it must undergo extensive testing, with much of it done at special facilities called proving grounds. These contain the same road conditions as you'd find in the real world, including broken concrete and potholes.

The difference is that while real roads start out smooth and gradually deteriorate, the rough ones in proving grounds have to be made that way right from the start.

"We've got a wide variety of roads that we use," says Frank Barhorst, supervisor of the Product Usage Measurements and Applications at General Motors' facility in Milford, Michigan.

"We test on bad roads and good roads. It all depends on what you're looking for."

The Milford Proving Grounds contains a wide variety of surfaces, including smooth asphalt, worn concrete, gravel roads and closely-set ridges called chatter bumps, along with a railway crossing, highway overpass and off-road courses. Engineers drive over the surfaces to evaluate such considerations as handling, durability and vehicle noise, including interior squeaks and rattles.

The rough roads don't have to look like the real thing, but they must accurately reproduce the same conditions. Milford's "potholes" are actually made of metal and set into the road surface. The engineers can even recreate actual roads, using an innovative scanner that produces a 3-D digital representation in millimeters as it's driven along. The digital data is used both for the test road and for a computer simulation used during the vehicle's initial design.

"We can predict the loads that a vehicle will see before one's even built," Barhorst says. "That's the best way to do this type of work."

The simulation is so accurate that driving the real car on the real road usually just confirms what the computer predicted. One of the toughest things can be finding construction crews to build the type of road they'd normally be fixing. Although there are a few firms that specialize in building proving grounds, there are always challenges.

"It takes a very specialized company," Barhorst says. "It sometimes takes discussion and sharing secrets. It's one of the more interesting and fun parts of my job."

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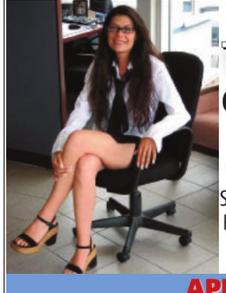

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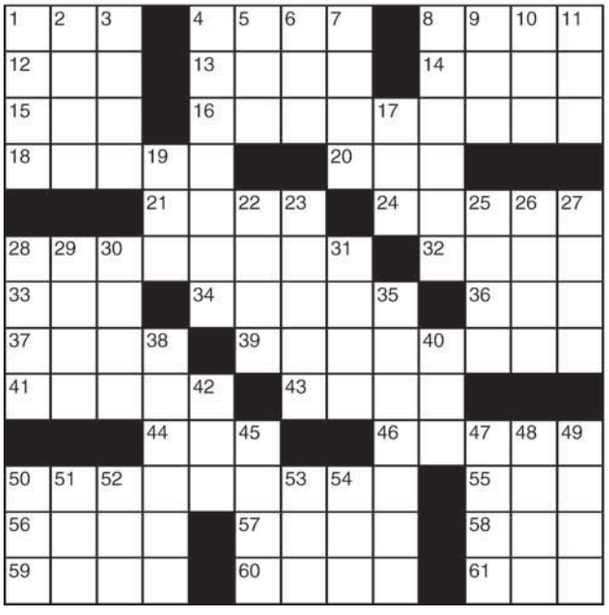
Crossword



Across
1 Foul
4 Supporters
8 Easter entrees
12 Actress Gardner
13 Somewhat
14 Shrek, e.g.
15 Trawler need
16 Jail
18 18th president
20 Obtained
21 Verdi opera
24 Intrinsically
28 Arab's hooded cloak
32 Clarinet insert
33 Anger
34 — Dame
36 Mr. Hammarskjöld
37 Culture medium
39 Rikki-Tikki-Tavi is one
41 Old photograph hue
43 Rules, for short
44 Have
46 Cowboy's greeting
50 1984 movie remade in 2011
55 Fish eggs
56 Inlet
57 Met melody
58 The whole enchilada
59 Burn some
60 Drove
61 Energy

Down
1 Gunshot sound
2 State with certainty
3 Information
4 Clique
5 Lawyers' org.
6 Zero
7 Sans escort
8 Owl, at times
9 Past
10 "— Doubtfire"
11 Catch a glimpse of
17 Jazz style
19 A Bobbsey twin
22 Dire prophecy
23 Titanic VIP
25 Start over
26 Red and Black
27 Lip
28 Diagonal
29 Press on
30 Harvest
31 Coastal flier
35 Highbrow
38 Hooligan
40 Bear, in Barcelona
42 Piercing tool
45 Biblical boatwright
47 Finish a film shoot
48 Clinton's 1996 opponent
49 Shrill bark
50 Media watchdog org.
51 Reaction to fireworks
52 Eggs in a lab
53 Raw rock
54 Round Table address

▶ Yesterday's answer

E	P	I	C		E	D	G	E		S	U	P		
M	I	C	A		T	E	E	M		P	R	O		
S	P	E	C	T	A	C	L	E		E	G	O		
			T	A	L	K		R	A	C	E	R		
G	A	S	U	P			B	A	L	I				
R	I	P	S		S	K	I	L	I	F	T	S		
A	D	E		P	L	E	A	D		I	R	A		
S	E	C	T	I	O	N	S		D	E	U	S		
		I	O	N	E			S	I	D	E	S		
G	I	M	M	E		L	A	M	A					
O	D	E		S	P	E	C	U	L	A	T	E		
T	E	N		A	H	E	M		U	N	I	T		
H	A	S		P	I	K	E		P	A	T	H		

For today's crossword answers and for expanded horoscopes, go to metronews.ca

Today's horoscope

♈ Aries March 21-April 20 It may seem as if things are going wrong and there is little you can do about it, but it's all part of a wider plan.
♉ Taurus April 21-May 21 If you have a well defined goal and a sensible plan, you really cannot lose.
♊ Gemini May 22-June 21 You need to talk over your problems with someone you know will lend a sympathetic ear.
♋ Cancer June 22-July 22 Is that the real you the world can see? Or is it one of your masks? If it's the latter don't forget that you are playing a role.
♌ Leo July 23-Aug.23 Look for ways to co-operate with those you work and do business with. You have wasted far too much time trying to outdo each other.
♍ Virgo Aug. 24- Sept. 22 You have become a bit too set in your ways of late and what happens today will bring that fact home.
♎ Libra Sept. 23-Oct. 23 Concentrate on the things that matter and don't waste time on each and every passing distraction.
♏ Scorpio Oct. 24-Nov. 22 You may feel out of touch with the spirit of the times, but is that bad?
♐ Sagittarius Nov. 23-Dec. 21 After all the exertions of recent weeks, you are entitled to a little down time. Let life come to you.
♑ Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 20 What you own and what you earn may be important to you but don't worry yourself sick about it.
♒ Aquarius Jan. 21-Feb. 18 If you have a good idea — and chances are you have a brilliant one — get started on it now.
♓ Pisces Feb. 19-March 20. Don't take colleagues' negative remarks to heart because they don't mean them. SALLY BROMPTON

Sudoku

		9	2		6		7	
5		6	8	1		2		
	4						6	3
9			4		8		5	6
	6			2			9	
4	8		9		5			1
1	9						8	
		4		8	7	9		2
	3		6		2	5		

How to play

Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Yesterday's answer ▶

3	7	2	5	4	1	8	6	9
1	8	6	2	7	9	5	3	4
4	5	9	6	3	8	7	1	2
8	3	7	9	5	2	6	4	1
2	9	1	4	8	6	3	7	5
5	6	4	3	1	7	2	9	8
9	4	8	7	6	5	1	2	3
6	1	3	8	2	4	9	5	7
7	2	5	1	9	3	4	8	6

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A Spaceman, Consummation has begun and I am your guide. Together we unlock the secrets of the stars. Your signal is fading. You are... my love. A NIGHT OWL

My Prince, Every morning is a wonderful morning waking up with you next to me! I love everything about you, think of you always and miss you when your gone. YOUR DIRTY GIRL

RJ Romeo, I miss you babe and I can't wait for you to come home to me for x-mas....I miss you and love you lots more than you'll ever know. UR BABIEE

Hubbyxoxo :P , Heyy idk why ur friends saying im pissed off at chu cause im not and w.e his name is idk him i never talked to him -.- btww I like you alot!!!!! :P 10/04/11 WIFEYXOXOX :P

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Prices do not include dealer administration fees ($399 to $699), licensing, PPSA or applicable taxes.

$500 Grad Rebate

Offer(s) available on all new 2011 and 2012 models through participating dealers to qualified customers who take delivery by January 3, 2012. Dealers may sell for less. Some conditions apply. Retailer order/trade may be necessary. Offers are subject to change and may be extended without notice. See dealer for complete details. Vehicle images shown may include optional accessories and upgrades. All offers exclude licensing, registration, insurance, PPSA, applicable taxes and variable dealer administration fees (up to $699). **0% purchase financing is available on all 2011 and 2012 Kia models on approved credit (OAC). Terms vary by model and trim, see dealer for details. Financing example based on 2012 Kia Sorento LX#75BC with a selling price of $28,379, financed at 0% APR for 60 months. Monthly payments equal $472.98 with a down payment/equivalent trade of $0. Cost of borrowing is $0 for a total obligation of $28,379. Delivery and destination fees ($1,650), other fees ($345), OMVIC fee, Environmental Fee and A/C tax (where applicable) are included. Licence, insurance, applicable taxes, variable dealer administration fees (up to $699), PPSA and registration fees are extra. Financing example includes a $1,250 loan credit (includes $500 loan credit and $750 loyalty bonus¥). Retailer may sell for less. See dealer for full details. ◆"Don't Pay Until Spring" on select models (120-day payment deferral) applies to purchase financing offers on select 2011 and 2012 models on approved credit (OAC). (Sportage/Sorento/Sedona/Borrego excluded). No interest will accrue during the first 90 days of the finance contract. After this period, interest starts to accrue and the purchaser will repay the principal interest monthly over the term of the contract. ★Every eligible contestant automatically wins a prize of $500 up to $10,000 towards the purchase or lease of any new 2011 or 2012 Kia vehicle, plus one lucky winner will be randomly selected to win $25,000 at the conclusion of the contest. Contest ends January 3, 2012. No purchase necessary to enter. Contest open to Canadian residents with a valid driver's licence, who have reached the age of majority in the province of their residence. Odds of winning vary per prize. Potential prize recipients must correctly answer a skill-testing question. Other restrictions apply, please see your participating Kia dealer for complete contest rules. ^FlexChoice Financing for 36-, 48- and 60-month terms on approved credit through TD Financing Services is available at participating dealerships to qualified retail customers on select new 2011 and 2012 Kia vehicles. Taxes on the full negotiated purchase price are payable at the beginning of the contract term, resulting in higher payments than payments taxed on a periodic basis, and are not reflected in advertised payments. The following terms apply to TD Financing Services contracts. Vehicles are financed over a 36-, 48- or 60-month term with payments amortized over a term of up to 96 months and the pre-determined residual balance payable at the end of the contract. At contract's end, customers have the choice of: (i) returning their vehicle through a Kia dealership with no further obligations (except payment of a $199 return fee and excess wear and tear, mileage and similar charges if exceeding 24,000 km per year allowance); (ii) financing the remaining balance for the rest of the amortization period at then-current standard rates; or (iii) paying the residual balance indicated on the bill of sale in full. Some conditions apply. FlexChoice Financing offered by TD in Quebec is subject to different terms and conditions. All advertised FlexChoice Financing offers are TD offers. Delivery and destination fees (up to $1,650), other fees ($345), OMVIC fee, Environmental Fee and A/C tax (where applicable) are included. Taxes, licence, insurance, registration, excess mileage, wear and tear charges, any retailer administration fees and other applicable fees and charges are not included. FlexChoice Financing is provided on approved credit through TD Financing Services. Your Option Date is set out on your TD Financing Services Payment Advantage Loan Certificate (the "Certificate"), which contains the terms and conditions governing your Return Value Option. If you exercise your Return Value Option, a return fee of $199 must be paid by you (not applicable in the province of Quebec) and you will be responsible for excess kilometre charges, excess wear and tear, and any other amounts as specified in your Certificate. The remaining loan balance will be subject to then-applicable TD Financing Services rates and fees. Retailers may sell for less. See participating retailers for complete details. Representative example based on 2012 Forte Sedan base model (FD540C) 2012 Rio5 (RO55TC) with a purchase price of $17,484/$15,584 financed at 3.39%/2.9% APR over 60/48 months with $0 down. Bi-weekly payments of $99/$108 for a cost of borrowing of $1,811/$1,184 and a total obligation of $17,795/$16,765. Includes delivery and destination fees of $1,455, other fees, OMVIC fee ($54), Environmental Fee and A/C tax (where applicable). 2012 Forte (FD540C) includes $500 dealer contribution, $500 FlexChoice credit and $500 WINterfest Everybody Wins credit. Rio5 (RO55TC) includes $500 WINterfest Everybody Wins credit. Certain restrictions apply. Taxes, PPSA, licence, insurance, registration, excess mileage, wear and tear charges, any administration or other applicable fees or charges are not included. Dealer may sell for less. See dealer for details. ◆Cash purchase price for 2011 Optima (OP54B) is $22,384 and includes a cash credit of $1,000 based on an MSRP of $23,384. Delivery and destination fees of $1,455, other fees of $34, OMVIC fee, Environmental Fee and A/C tax ($100, where applicable) are included. Licence, insurance, applicable taxes, PPSA, dealer administration fees of up to $699 and registration fees are extra. Retailer may sell for less. See dealer for full details. Available at participating dealers. ‡Loan credit (cash savings) for 2012 Kia Sorento LX A1 (SR75BC) is $1,250 (includes $500 loan credit and $750 loyalty bonus¥) and is available on purchase financing only on approved credit (OAC). Loan credit varies by model and trim. ¥Loyalty Bonus offer available on 2012 Kia Sorento/2011 Optima Hybrid. Loyalty Bonus offer applicable to cash purchase, lease and purchase financing only before January 3, 2012. Offer is transferrable within same household only (must provide proof of address). Limit of one bonus per customer or household. Certain restrictions apply. See dealer for details. ÷Forte Competitive Bonus offer in the amount of $500 available on the purchase or lease of new 2012 Forte models for owners of a Honda Civic, Toyota Corolla or Mazda3 with proof of ownership. See dealer or kia.ca for full program details. Optima Competitive Bonus offer in the amount of $1,000 available on the purchase or lease of new 2011 Optima Hybrid models for owners of most current competitive hybrid vehicles with proof of ownership. See dealer or kia.ca for eligibility of competitive vehicles and full program details. Certain restrictions apply. Competitive Bonus amounts will be deducted from the negotiated purchase/lease price before taxes. Offers are transferrable within same household (must provide proof of address). Limit of one bonus per Kia vehicle and per eligible competitive vehicle. Offer not combinable with any other loyalty/conquest offers. Offer ends January 3, 2012. ~2011 Optima awarded 2012 Auto123.com Website Car of the Year. Visit auto123.com/en/awards for more details. ^^C.O.-credit for 2011 Optima Hybrid is $1,000 and is applicable to the purchase or lease of a new 2011 Kia Optima Hybrid. Available at participating dealers. Certain restrictions apply. See dealer for details. ~2012 Kia Sorento/2012 Kia Forte/2012 Kia Optima awarded the Top Safety Pick by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. Visit www.iihs.org for full details. ^Highway/city fuel consumption of these vehicles may vary. These estimates are based on the government of Canada's approved criteria and testing methods. Refer to the government of Canada publication *EnerGuide Fuel Consumption Guide*. Some conditions apply to the $500 Grad Rebate Program and $750 Kia Mobility Program. See dealer for details. Information in this advertisement is believed to be accurate at the time of print. 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